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Let us take a pledge on the occasion of this New Year, to create a Tamil Nadu that is prosperous and strong and to work unitedly in a sustained manner to steer the State on the path of progress.

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami

- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

Editor and Publisher

Dr. P. Sankar I.A.S.,
Director of Information &
Public Relations and Ex-officio
Joint Secretary to Government

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Joint Editor

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First Wrapper

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** distributed at the Secretariat on 05.01.2019, for the celebration of the Pongal festival, a gift hamper and an additional Government Pongal gift of Rs.1,000 to family card holders and Sri Lankan Tamils staying in camps.

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'On New Year day, let us take the pledge to unitedly take the State ahead'

Greetings of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** on the occasion of New Year - 31.12.2018 (English Translation).

On the happy occasion of New Year, I extend my warm greetings to my beloved people of Tamil Nadu.

'Everyone should get everything and there should be no need for any need' is the motto of the Government and the dream of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. To realize this dream, it is well known that the Tamil Nadu Government, which is following the path laid down by Amma, has been implementing many constructive schemes in the State.

With people's welfare as the only objective, the Government has been envisaging schemes and implementing them. People should make proper use of these welfare schemes. Let us take a pledge on the occasion of this New Year, to create a Tamil Nadu that is prosperous and strong and to work unitedly in a sustained manner to steer the State on the path of progress..

I greet people on this New Year wishing new enthusiasm and growth to them. I extend my New Year greetings once again to the people of Tamil Nadu.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister with his able leadership has made the administration responsive to public needs

Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit** in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 02.01.2019.

Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Assembly, Vanakkam.

It is my privilege and honour to inaugurate this sixth session of the fifteenth Legislative Assembly by delivering my address in this august House. I take this opportunity to extend my warm greetings to all of you for the New Year and the ensuing Pongal festival. I wish that the New Year will bring greater prosperity and happiness to the people of Tamil Nadu.

2) This Government, led by the Hon'ble Chief Minister is being steadfast in carrying

forward the proud legacy of the **late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa,** by implementing programmes and policies envisioned by her. As a true welfare State, this Government continues to focus on the socio-economic development of the State, with a special emphasis on protecting the interests of the poor and other vulnerable sections of society. I am glad to mention that the Hon'ble Chief Minister with his able leadership has made the administration responsive to public needs and has been taking swift decisions by clearing an unprecedented number of 11,286 files since he assumed office.

3) Tamil Nadu, as always, has continued to be a fiscally prudent State, not withstanding several financial challenges. However, the revenue deficit has been on the rise in recent years mainly due to the devolution formulae evolved by the 14th Finance Commission which has adversely affected the State finances. Further, implementation of Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) and 7th Pay Commission recommendations has also widened the revenue deficit. The delay in the release of Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) and Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation, due to the State, has also accentuated this problem. The Fifteenth Finance Commission, constituted by the Hon'ble President of India to give recommendations on the distribution of financial resources between Centre and States, visited the State in September 2018 and has had detailed discussions with the Government. I earnestly hope that the 15th Finance Commission will uphold the principles of equity and efficiency and will give a fair deal in financial devolution to the State of Tamil Nadu.

4) Tamil Nadu has successfully embraced the GST despite the challenges associated with the transition to a completely new tax regime. However, there has been delay by the Government of India in the release of State share of IGST and in the settlement of GST compensation on the guaranteed 14 per cent growth in SGST revenues. The Government of India is yet to make IGST settlement of Rs.5,454 crore relating to the year 2017-2018 and short payments on GST compensation of Rs.455crore for the year 2017-2018 and Rs.1,305 crore for the period from April to September 2018, which are adversely affecting the State finances.

I therefore urge the Central Government to settle these dues at the earliest and ensure prompt release of such dues in future.

5) The State of Tamil Nadu has expressed its concerns on various National legislations such as suggesting amendments to National Medical Commission Bill, withdrawal of Dam Safety Bill, issues related to Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, Electricity Bill etc. These concerns have been put forward by the State to uphold the interests of the people of Tamil Nadu. The Government of India has introduced the Dam Safety Bill in the Parliament, which infringes upon the State's rights. I hope the concerns of the State will be impartially addressed and resolved by the Government of India in such legislations.

6) The Government has issued orders for permanent closure of the Sterlite copper plant in Thoothukudi with immediate effect, as the unit has failed to comply with the environmental norms. This order has been challenged by Sterlite Industries in the National Green

Tribunal (NGT) and the Tribunal has ordered to reopen the unit in spite of the objections raised by this Government. This order has already been stayed by the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court. This Government will appeal against the order of the National Green Tribunal.

7) Tamil Nadu has been pioneering various research activities. The proposals by the Central Government to close some of the research and other Central institutions in the State will adversely impact the scientific research work in Tamil Nadu which are beneficial to farmers and fishermen. I expect that the request of State Government to continue the operation of Central institutes like the Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture (CIBA) in Chennai, Sugarcane Breeding Institute at Coimbatore, National Research Centre for Banana at Tiruchirappalli, Potato Research Institute at Ooty and the Central Press at Coimbatore will be duly considered by the Government of India.

8) The State has recently suffered from the devastating Gaja cyclone, which ravaged the Cauvery delta area and the Central Districts of the State, causing enormous destruction in terms of loss of life, damages to houses, crops, coconut and other plantations and severe damages to power infrastructure. The State Government had taken prompt pre-emptive action to evacuate people from vulnerable coastal areas and alerted the fishermen as part of its pre-monsoon preparedness, which saved large number of lives. The Government also acted swiftly in the aftermath of the calamity and put 4.81 lakh persons in relief camps and has compassionately extended gratuitous relief to 6.4 lakh affected families which includes a package of essential items. The Hon'ble Chief Minister announced a comprehensive package of Rs.2,335.48 crore so far, for immediate relief and rehabilitation of the affected areas. I thank the Central Government for expediting the release of Rs.353.70 crore towards second instalment of its committed contribution to SDRF allocation for the year 2018-2019. I applaud the Hon'ble Chief Minister for unveiling a programme for replacing one lakh fully damaged huts with concrete houses and extending full financial support for rejuvenation of coconut and other plantations under project mode. The State Government has sought assistance of Rs.2,709 crore immediate relief and Rs.15,190 crore for permanent restoration from Government of India, following which a Central team visited the affected Districts. While thanking the Government of India for sanctioning Rs.900.31 crore additionally under National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF) for immediate relief, I request the Government of India to extend adequate additional financial assistance to the State Government under ongoing schemes to rebuild the affected houses and restore the economic livelihood of people.

9) This Government has strongly opposed the recent move by the Central Water Commission for giving clearance to Government of Karnataka to prepare the Detailed Project Report for constructing a reservoir at Mekedatu in Karnataka. This act is a blatant violation of the Hon'ble Supreme Court judgment on the order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal which states that 'upper riparian State shall not take any action so as to

affect the scheduled deliveries of water to lower riparian States'. It is my duty to point out that this august House has also passed a resolution unanimously condemning and opposing the action of the Government of Karnataka and the Central Water Commission. It has also urged the Government of India to direct the Central Water Commission immediately to withdraw the permission granted for preparing the Detailed Project Report and to restrain the Government of Karnataka or its agencies from taking up any work at Mekedatu or at any other place in the Cauvery basin of Karnataka, in violation of the final order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal and the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, without the consent of the State of Tamil Nadu.

10) This Government opposes the attempt by Kerala to construct a new dam to replace the existing Mullai Periyar Dam and will continue its pursuit of raising the water level of this dam to 152 feet. Though the inter-State river water disputes can be better resolved through mutual trust and understanding, the State of Tamil Nadu has been repeatedly forced to seek legal remedy to protect its legitimate riparian rights. Therefore, following the footsteps of late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa, our Hon'ble Chief Minister is committed to protecting the interests of the farmers and the people of Tamil Nadu by all legal means in inter-State river water disputes.

11) The arrest of fishermen and confiscation of their fishing vessels by the Sri Lankan Navy continues unabated. In the last two years, 551 fishermen were apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy. I appreciate the efforts taken by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in securing the release of 206 boats and 543 fishermen who were languishing in the Sri Lankan prisons. The State Government reiterates its stand that Government of India should amicably resolve this issue to find a lasting solution with the Sri Lankan Government.

12) The 'Tamil Nadu Vision 2023' Document conceived by the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa has always served as the guiding light for this Government to take the State on the path of development. The Government has laid down the broad policy framework and strategies for the critical areas of development which includes the recently unveiled Eco-tourism policy, Forest policy, Youth policy, Food processing policy, e-Governance policy and Information Communication Technology policy. I hope that this well-thought out policy framework will pave the way for the State to achieve its developmental goals.

13) I am happy to note that the State Government has won several accolades such as Krishi Karman award for agriculture and Awards of Excellence instituted by 'India Today' in categories of 'Overall best performing State', 'Tourism', 'Infrastructure' and in 'maintenance of law and order'. Further, the State also received best practice award for the computerisation of Public Distribution system, recognition for high quality health services, including best performance in organ transplantation as well as awards for renewable energy. The State is also ranked second in good governance in the Public affairs index created by the Public Affairs Centre, Bengaluru. The State ranks second in the Sustainable Development

Goals index compiled and published recently by Niti Aayog. These accomplishments bear testimony to the remarkable administrative prowess of this Government in ensuring overall development of the State.

14) The Government has approved the creation of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Arts and Social Development Research Chair in the name of Bharat Ratna Dr.M.G.R at a cost of Rs.1.08crore in the International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai. In the interest of promoting Tamil language and culture, a conference of international Tamil organizations will be held once in two years through World Tamil Sangam, Madurai.

I hope that the Government of India will favourably consider the requests of the State Government to confer 'Bharat Ratna' posthumously on Tamil Nadu's revered leaders, Perarignar Anna and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and to rename the Chennai Central Railway Station as 'Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G. Ramachandran Central Railway Station'.

15) The maintenance of law and order is a pre-requisite for the overall development of the State. This Government has effectively maintained law and order, ensuring peace and stability in the State. The wellness programme launched by the Government to rejuvenate police personnel is a path breaking programme that will motivate the police force and keep their morale high. I wish to point out that the recent National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report has named Chennai as the safest metro and Coimbatore as the safest city for women. The launch of 181 helpline for women's safety and 'Kavalan App' of Police will definitely strengthen the efforts of the State Government in ensuring safety and security of the people, particularly women.

16) The State Government has always adopted a multi-pronged approach towards the development of agriculture and its allied sectors, aimed at creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the farmers through technological interventions and diversification. It is heartening to note that the State is one of the top performers in implementing the 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana', a centrally sponsored scheme, aimed at mitigating weather risk through crop insurance. The 'Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture' to improve the productivity of millets, pulses, cotton and oil seeds in dry lands, Collective Farming Scheme, Integrated Farming, accelerated implementation of micro irrigation schemes, strengthening of irrigation structures and remunerative value addition through Farmer Interest Groups and Farmer Producer Organisations etc., will certainly enhance farmers' income and promote sustainable farming.

17) This Government is taking several measures to strengthen irrigation structures and augment water storage capacity. The 'Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation Project' (TNIAMP) at an outlay of Rs.2,962 crore has already been launched. The programme of permitting farmers to collect silt from irrigation tanks and 'Kudimaramath' programme to rejuvenate irrigation structures, are being implemented with full zeal. I appreciate the Government for immediately sanctioning Rs.387.60 crore to construct the new Kollidam regulator at Mukkombu in Trichy District to

replace the old regulator which was damaged in the recent flood. **The comprehensive Athikadavu-Avinashi Scheme has been taken up at a cost of Rs.1,652 crore and will benefit 24,468 acres of cultivated lands besides recharging ground water and augmenting water supply in Coimbatore, Erode and Tiruppur Districts, by channelising surplus water of Bhavani river to 74 tanks and 971 ponds. The tender process has already commenced and the project will be launched very soon by the Hon'ble Chief Minister.**

18) The flagship scheme of 'Free distribution of milch cows, goats and sheep' being implemented by this Government since 2011, has provided sustained livelihood opportunities to the rural poor, insulating them from economic vulnerabilities. These efforts have been supplemented by initiatives such as 'Poultry Development Scheme', 'Fodder Development Scheme' and by substantially augmenting the veterinary infrastructure throughout the State. The State has witnessed remarkable growth in the dairy sector due to the concerted efforts of the Government with the milk procurement reaching a record level of 37.03 lakh litres during October 2018.

19) This Government is committed to improving the Fisheries Sector, by strengthening of infrastructure like fishing harbours, fish landing centres, fish processing parks and promoting inland aquaculture. The Government is working in tandem with the Government of India to encourage deep sea fishing using tuna long-liners. The development of fishing harbours at Mookaiyur and Kunthukal in Ramanathapuram District and at Poompuhar in Nagapattinam District will further promote deep sea fishing.

20) The innovative strategies in poverty reduction under 'Pudhu Vazhvu' led to the formation of Self Help groups, Village Poverty Reduction Committees and Panchayat Level Federations ensuring better economic and social empowerment of the rural poor in 120 blocks of the State. These strategies are now being scaled upto cover the remaining 265 blocks under the 'Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission' (TNSRLM) thereby covering the whole State. Through the Self Help Group – Bank Linkage Programme, credit linkages are being extended under TNSRLM, to start micro-enterprises for sustained economic security of the rural poor. The TNSRLM model has been replicated in the urban areas through the 'Tamil Nadu State Urban Livelihoods Mission' for providing sustained employment opportunities to the urban poor.

21) The State has taken earnest efforts for implementing the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' effectively to meet its national goals. I am happy to note that 100 percent sanitation coverage has been achieved in the State and all Village Panchayats have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). The State is taking active steps for sustaining the ODF status to attain the goal of universal sanitation in the State. Tamil Nadu is the first State in the country to achieve universal coverage in the establishment of Solid Waste Management Systems among Village Panchayats. The **'Thooimai kaavalars'** have ensured that last mile sanitation is a reality. This Government is committed to protecting the

environment and eco system and has banned certain ‘use and throw away plastics’ with effect from 1st of January, 2019.

22) I take pride in the fact that the policy of ‘Universal Public Distribution System’ (PDS) of the State Government has ensured food security for all. The supply of rice free of cost and supply of sugar, dal and palm oil at subsidized prices to eligible card holders, has ensured that the State is free from hunger. Implementation of ‘Comprehensive Computerization Scheme’ in PDS operations with Aadhaar linkage has eliminated bogus cards and multiple entries of beneficiaries. This Government has achieved the remarkable feat of distributing Aadhaar linked smart cards to 2.01crore families to ensure a seamless and transparent Public Distribution System. **Following the footsteps of late Chief Ministers M.G.Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa, who have always helped the poor and downtrodden during calamities, this Government will distribute Pongal Gift hampers containing raw rice, sugar, raisins, cashew nut, cardamom and sugarcane to all card holders to celebrate the Pongal festival, to mitigate the impact of Gaja cyclone in Cauvery delta and the widespread drought in northern Districts. In addition to this, I am happy to announce that this Government will give a cash support of Rs.1,000 per family for the celebration of Pongal festival which will be applicable for the entire State.**

23) The systematic efforts taken by the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa brought about a turn around in the power sector in the State. This Government continues her initiatives by implementing thermal and hydro-electric projects to the tune of 17,100 MW at a total estimated cost of Rs.1.27 lakh crore, which are under various stages of execution. Tamil Nadu continues to top the States producing renewable energy, with an installed capacity of 11,716 MW. The transmission infrastructure throughout the State is being strengthened with assistance from Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), KfW and National Clean Energy Fund at a cost of Rs.9,178 crore. A robust power sector has become the biggest strength of the State for attracting new investments.

24) The State has been undertaking major road infrastructure projects including construction of by-passes, ring roads and bridges under the ‘Comprehensive Road Infrastructure Development Programme’. The decision of the Government to transfer 7,964 kilometre length of 2,596 Panchayat and Panchayat Union roads from Rural Local Bodies to Highways Department for upgrading them in a phased manner over three years, to the standards of Other District Roads is a laudable initiative. The first phase of upgrading 1,436 kilometre of roads at a cost of Rs.608 crore is under progress and the second phase to upgrade 1,538 kilometre of roads at a cost of Rs.882 crore has been sanctioned by the Government this year. The World Bank aided ‘Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project–II’ is also contributing immensely to the creation of road infrastructure of high standards in the State. I compliment the State for developing an excellent road network which provides the core strength for accelerated economic development of the State.

25) The development of certain major infrastructure projects requires close co-ordination between the Union and State Governments. Some critical projects such as Chennai Port - Maduravoyal Elevated Corridor, Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor, Chennai-Kanniyakumari Industrial Corridor and upgrading the East Coast Road as four lane National Highway, are of vital importance to the State. I hope that the Government of India will give paramount priority to these projects and will expedite their implementation.

26) The State Transport Corporations operate more than 21,678 buses on about 19,488 routes carrying 1.74 crore passengers per day. Despite revision in fares, the bus ticket tariffs in Tamil Nadu are still among the lowest in the country. The Government is absorbing the additional costs that arise due to increase in diesel prices and has sanctioned Rs.268.35crore as Diesel Price Compensation to the Transport Corporations from January 2018 to October 2018. **The Government is also embarking on a comprehensive restructuring programme for the Transport Corporations with the support of the German bilateral financing agency, KfW. This would involve replacement of the aging fleet with fuel efficient BS-VI buses and procurement of environment friendly electric buses in metro cities like Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai.**

27) The State Government has revived the schemes of 'Integrated Urban Development Mission' (IUDM) and 'Chennai Mega City Development Mission' (CMCDM) in 2018-2019 with an annual allocation of Rs.750 crore and Rs.500 crore respectively, to augment financial resources for urban infrastructure development. The 'Smart Cities' programme is being implemented in eleven cities. Various urban projects are currently being undertaken in 28 cities and towns of Tamil Nadu under the 'Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation' (AMRUT) programme. The Government is also implementing the 'Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development Project' (TNSUDP) with World Bank aid and the 'Tamil Nadu Urban Flagship Investment Programme' (TNUFIP) with Asian Development Bank assistance, for giving greater fillip to meeting the growing urban infrastructure requirements of the State.

28) One of the noteworthy initiatives of this Government is to ensure slum-free cities and hut-free Villages in the State. The State has been a forerunner in providing houses to the rural poor through the 'Chief Minister's Solar Powered Green House Scheme' supplementing the efforts under the 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin)'.The Government has constituted the 'Shelter Fund' to raise adequate resources to meet the housing needs of the urban poor. The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) has so far taken up construction of 5,16,741 dwelling units at a project cost of Rs.21,604 crore under the 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)'. **The Government has formulated a comprehensive housing project called 'Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project' to transform slums in Chennai, Thiruvallur and Kancheepuram Districts with World Bank funding assistance. A similar project for areas other than Chennai Metropolitan Area has been**

posed to the Asian Development Bank for assistance. The Common Building Rules will also be notified shortly to enhance the ease of doing business in the housing sector. Further, the decision of the Government to raise the Floor Space Index (FSI) will go a long way to make housing more affordable.

29) The Chennai Metro Rail has provided a world class urban public transport facility in Chennai. The Phase–I has already commenced operations and is expected to be fully commissioned by January 2019. The Phase-I extension from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar at an estimated cost of Rs.3,770 crore will be ready for inauguration by June 2020 as scheduled. The State Government has already accorded in-principle approval for the implementation of Phase-II of Chennai Metro Rail Project covering 107.55 kilometre in three corridors. **I am happy to inform this august House that the Japan International Co-operation Agency has now approved the funding of Rs.20,196 crore for the priority stretches totaling 52 kilometre from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur and Madhavaram to Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus (CMBT). The loan agreement for the first tranche of approximately Rs.4,770 crore was signed on 21st December, 2018 and work will commence shortly. I am glad to announce that the Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA) Act and its relevant rules will be notified on 16th January, 2019 to make the integrated functioning of Multi Modal Transportation System a reality.**

30) With the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education at 48.6, Tamil Nadu continues to reign as numero-uno in India. In order to make higher education affordable to students from economically backward regions and rural areas, 41 University constituent Arts and Science Colleges are being converted to Government Arts and Science Colleges in a phased manner from 2018-2019. The scholarship support to first generation graduates has also made immense contribution in this regard. Further, 264 new courses have been started during this year in 61 Government Arts and Science Colleges. Higher Education institutions should be headed by competent and talented Vice Chancellors to improve the quality of teaching and research to international standards. Accordingly, this Government is adopting a transparent selection procedure in appointing Vice Chancellors. Similarly the vacancies in the syndicate of Universities are being filled up promptly. I am confident that these efforts of the Government will substantially improve the quality of higher education and research work in the State.

31) I compliment the State for providing essential study materials like books, notebooks and laptops, four sets of uniform, school bags, footwear, bus passes and bicycles to students of Government and Government aided schools, free of cost. The special cash incentives provided by the State to girl children have increased their enrolment and reduced drop-outs. The Government has been making substantial investments in the development of school infrastructure and upgrading schools wherever necessary to ensure availability of high quality education. It is heartening to note that the 'Atal Tinkering labs', Smart classes and Hi-Tech labs

in schools have been effectively leveraging the capabilities of modern technology to impart quality education to students. **As the literacy among tribal's is significantly lower than the State average, this Government will soon launch a scheme to extend financial support to Non-Governmental Organisations for opening schools in interior tribal areas, catering substantially to tribal students.**

32) I am proud to say that Tamil Nadu has made great strides in comprehensive public health service delivery. As per the latest Sample Registration System Data, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has reduced to 66 per one lakh live births and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has been brought down to 17 per 1,000 live births. The ambitious 'Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme' launched in 2012 continues to deliver state-of-the-art quality health care to the poor and needy. The Government has recently increased the insurance coverage from Rs.2 lakh to Rs.5 lakh per family by integrating the State scheme with the Government of India's flagship scheme of 'Pradhan Mantri Jan ArogyaYojana' from September 2018. I am delighted to note that the Government of India's 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' which benefits pregnant and lactating women giving first live birth, has also been synchronised with the State Government's 'Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme' with effect from April 2018. The State sponsored health schemes like 'Menstrual Hygiene Programme', 'Amma Baby Care Kit' and 'Amma Magapperu Sanjeevi' will continue to augment the efforts of the State in ensuring maternal and child care. **I thank the Government of India for sanctioning Rs.1,264 crore for establishing AIIMS at Thoppur in Madurai District. It will go a long way in providing high-end healthcare services to the people of southern Districts of Tamil Nadu.**

33) Industrial sector being the engine of economic growth and development, the State Government is giving special focus to attract new investments. **The State being a major automobile hub, thrust will be given for the promotion of new-generation electric vehicles with appropriate incentives.** Renowned organisations such as National Counil of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) have hailed the efforts of the State in fostering industrial development. The Government of Tamil Nadu is organising the second edition of Global Investors Meet (GIM) on 23rd and 24th of January 2019 at Chennai Trade Centre. Japan, South Korea, Australia, France and United Kingdom are the partner nations for GIM-2019. The State Government is taking all efforts to make GIM-2019 a resounding success. **To promote aerospace and defence production, this Government will release the Tamil Nadu Aerospace and Defence Industrial policy shortly.** The establishment of industrial hubs for defence products in Chennai – Vellore – Salem – Hosur-Coimbatore-Trichy corridor will definitely improve the prospects of Tamil Nadu as a major defence manufacturing force. I request the Government of India to expedite the implementation of this defence industrial production corridor project.

34) The Government has taken various steps to provide a vibrant business environment and

eco system for starting new enterprises, through single window clearance besides promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. **Start-up entrepreneurs are being promoted under the 'New Entrepreneur-cum-Enterprise Development Scheme' (NEEDS).The new startup and innovation policy will be unveiled by this Government shortly to improve the startup environment**. The Government has amended the Tender Transparency Act to make it mandatory for State Government Departments and Public Sector Undertakings to procure at least 25 percent of the requirement of goods and services from Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSME) when they participate in the tender. The numerous initiatives taken by the Government will definitely give an impetus to the MSME sector in Tamil Nadu.

35) The Government has taken up e-Governance initiatives with the primary objective of improving public service delivery and ushering in transparency and efficiency in public administration. An online portal for e-Sevai services has been developed and launched to make these services available round the clock to the public. Under land record modernization programme, the Tamil Nadu e- Governance Agency has developed 'e-Adangal', an application for digitising the adangal registers. The Registration Department has implemented the prestigious web-based comprehensive software called STAR 2.0 which ensures end-to-end digitisation of the registration process. The completion of land record modernisation and computerisation of registration process will help the Government in updating the land records online, facilitating speedy disposal of land record mutations.

36) The Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation has been closely working with the industries in the State to identify skill gaps and for conducting training to improve the employability of our youth. I am happy to note that the State Government is ensuring the skilling of the rural and urban poor through the Centrally Sponsored schemes namely 'Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana' (DDU-GKY), 'Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas lhyhYojana' (PMKVY) and 'Employment through Skills Training & Placement' (ESTP) under the 'Deen dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission' (DAY-NULM)programme. I am confident that all these endeavours will significantly improve the employability of the educated youth while also resolving the problem of skill deficit presently being faced by the industries.

37) The Government is committed to ensuring the welfare of the youth and strives to develop world class sportspersons in the State by providing necessary infrastructure and financial support like sports scholarships and awarding high cash incentives to the medal winners and their coaches in National and international tournaments such as Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, South Asian Federation Games and the National Games. I appreciate the Government for announcing three percent reservation in employment for eminent sportspersons.

38) Tamil Nadu has been ranked first in both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in the Country for four consecutive years from 2014 to 2017. The promotional slogan 'Enchanting Tamil Nadu' continues to attract large number

of tourists to the State. The State has signed a Memorandum of Understanding recently with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Tranche IV funding of Rs.218 crore for continuing our efforts in promoting destination and circuit based tourism.

39) The Government has always given utmost importance to the safety, empowerment and welfare of socially disadvantaged sections of the society like the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Most Backward Classes, De-notified Communities, Backward Classes and Minorities. I am happy to mention that the Vanniyar Trust Act has already been notified by this Government. The post-matric scholarship schemes for the students belonging to the socially disadvantaged sections have given them access to higher education. The Government of India has revised the guidelines of post-matric scholarship for Scheduled Caste students, thereby increasing the committed liability of the State from Rs.353.55 crore to Rs.1,526.46 crore with effect from 2017-2018. As a result, post-matric scholarship scheme, though a centrally sponsored scheme, the State is forced to bear almost the entire liability. I request the Government of India to reconsider this issue and hope that the guidelines would be revised to share the expenses between the Centre and States as in the case of other Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

40) As a welfare State, it is the duty of the Government to protect and safeguard the vulnerable sections of the society like women, children, differently-abled, transgenders, senior citizens and destitutes. The Government will continue to provide assistance through the marriage assistance schemes, social security pensions, cradle baby scheme and integrated special homes for senior citizens and destitute children. The 'Integrated Child Development Services' (ICDS) scheme is being effectively implemented to ensure proper development of children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and nursing mothers by providing them nutritious food and supplements. The 'Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Nutritious Meal Programme' is praise worthy scheme of Tamil Nadu which tends to ensure overall nutritional security of all school-going children by providing them variety meals with eggs. I am happy to state that 'Amma Two Wheeler' scheme is empowering the working women by providing them financial assistance upto Rs.25,000 each to purchase two wheelers.

41) I have broadly outlined the policies and programmes of the State Government. We all know that democracy fosters noble institutions. This Democracy only has enabled all of you to represent the people who have elected you to this august House with the confidence that you will serve the State and its people with utmost dedication and commitment. It is therefore your bounden duty to dedicate yourselves to fulfill the aspirations of the people and to win over their trust and confidence. I am confident that you will adhere to the highest traditions of democratic principles while discussing and debating issues that will further the socio-economic development of the State and the well-being of the people. Finally, before concluding my speech, I once again wish you a happy New Year and Pongal.

Nandri! Vanakkam! Jai Hind! ■

Carving out Kallakurichi as Tamil Nadu's 33rd District...

Hon'ble Chief Minister shows how State is surging ahead and creating enviable records

Reply of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** in the Legislative Assembly on 08.01.2019, to the debate on the resolution thanking the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu for his address.(English Translation)

I wish to reply to the debate on the Hon'ble Governor's Address delivered in the Legislative Assembly on 02.01.2019.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I bow to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Idaya Deivam Amma who was like a gentle breeze from the Pothigai, akin to beaten gold in purity, a liberating spirit out of a revolution that blessed the Earth with her birth; heir to the last 7 'Vallals' extolled in literature and the merciful rain that blesses even the poorest of the poor.

People have the unshakeable faith that only the 'Leaf' regime will provide visionary schemes. No one can forget, deny or hide

at any place or at any time the 'Annadhana' scheme to remove the hunger of devotees, Amma restaurants for quality food at cheap rates, nutrition to the child in the womb, Amma Baby Care kit to the just born child, Breast Milk Bank for the child born, Amma Maternity Sanjeevi scheme for mothers perpetuating the lineage, Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme and Amma Body Scan scheme for people's well being and for school children a variety of mixed rice, 14 kinds of educational aids, exhilarating schemes for poor students from pre-kindergarten to university; second green revolution fetching 'Krishi Karman' Award five times, distribution at no cost of goats and cows that sowed the seed for a White Revolution, Green Houses for the houseless and many more schemes in Hon'ble Amma's Rule that infused confidence even in destitutes that Amma was there to take care of them as a Mother; actions like retrieving Mother Cauvery from the shuttered dams of Karnataka and reviving agriculture (in Tamil Nadu), wiping out the tears of coastal fisherfolk and protecting their lives and belongings, putting a full stop to the power problem and converting Tamil Nadu into a power surplus State, executing Rain Water Harvesting Scheme to raise ground water table and supply water in abundance, implementing THAI scheme to bring about economic improvement for rural people and the implementation of a series of schemes like Amma pharmacy, Amma salt, Amma drinking water and Amma cement.

As we have been trained by Hon'ble Amma in politics and administration, we continue to serve the people on the lines of Amma. In all our welfare programmes, Amma's soul is there. That is why the whole world, I am proud to say, accepts our programmes as pioneering ones and implements them.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Members have expressed their considerate views on the motion of thanks to the Hon'ble Governor for his address to this House on 02.01.2019, moved by the Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir Thiru. Pollachi V.Jayaraman and seconded by Hon'ble Member Thiru. P.M.Narasimhan. I thank all the Members, who were either critical or appreciative of the Government in their speeches.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Sage Valluvar has stated that rendering proper justice is awarding appropriate punishment in consultation with wise men after examining the nature of crime impartially. *("Orndhu kannodaathu irai purindhu yaar maattum therndhu seivahdha murai")*. In accordance with this dictum, Tamil Nadu shines as a State where law and order is maintained well and where people can live without fear. Rectitude consists of examining crimes that may have been committed, showing no favour to any one, desiring to act with impartiality towards all and awarding such punishments as may be wisely resolved upon.

Caste conflicts, extremism, communalism, fundamentalism and labour unrest have come down greatly due to the modernization of the Police Department, skill upgradation of police personnel, distribution of modern equipment and training for improving resolve.

As a part of the modernization programme of the Police Department, the Government

is effectively implementing schemes like installation of mPassport App, Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), equipping State Police Headquarters Control Room with modern technology, Rejuvenation training for facing future challenges and fixing of CCTV cameras. I feel proud to say that Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in the whole of India in fixing CCTV cameras for monitoring law and order. This has helped immediate detection of most of the crimes that had taken place recently. More than two lakh cameras are in operation in Chennai and they have been very helpful to detect greater number of crimes at a very short time.

Steps are being taken to construct safety vaults in 3,087 temples at a cost of Rs.10 lakh each (total Rs.308.70 crore) for safeguarding ancient metal and stone murthis in temples.

As the first of its kind in the whole Country, Amma's Government has introduced and is implementing a Wellness Programme- a psychological training programme - for police personnel and members of their families, jointly with NIMHANS so as to de-stress them. To give this training, 254 Police Officers and 208 psychiatrists have been selected and are given training at NIMHANS. This wellness programme is conducted at 50 places in Tamil Nadu and so far 10,000 Police Officers and 9,000 children and relatives of Police Personnel have benefited. The trainees have informed that this training has created goodwill and harmony in relationship between the police personnel and their superior officers.

This year the Uniformed Services Recruitment Board has selected 511 sub-inspectors and 6,140 police constables – totally 6,651 persons for uniformed services.

The Tamil Nadu Police has earned the name as the best force in the Country. As a proof of this, the 'India Today' magazine has given two awards recently to Tamil Nadu – for the best maintenance of law and order and for accomplishing this in a short time.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Tamil Nadu occupies the second place in the list of States conducive for investments as it has the best human resources, continuous power supply and strong infrastructure. It has the maximum number of factories in the Country and remains the premier State in offering industrial job opportunities.

The Tamil Nadu Business facilitation Act 2018 ensures grant of needed permission to companies coming forward to invest in the State in 30 days through the single window procedure. The Act has clauses for deemed grant of permission if it is delayed for more than 30 days. Under this scheme, 46 applications have so far been received of which permission has been granted for 28. Of the remaining, additional details have been sought for 3 applications and the rest are under examination.

Following the mega success of the Global Investors Meet - 2015, GIM-2019 is proposed to be held in this January month.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has approved investment for expansion programmes of 27 industrial manufacturing companies so far; as these companies propose to invest about Rs.50,444 crore, there is potential for about 50,000 direct employment opportunities.

Under phase-I of the Chennai Metro Rail Project, passenger services have already commenced on a 35 km long corridor; works have been completed on the stretch AG-DMS to Washermenpet and services will be inaugurated shortly; Tiruvottiyur-Wimco Nagar track extension work is in progress. For further expansion of the Metro Rail Project, administrative sanction has been given for 3 new rail corridors under phase II programme – Madhavaram to SIPCOT in OMR, Light House to Poonamallee bypass road and Madhavaram to Sholinganallur. Under this phase – II, the Japan International Co-operation Agency provides credit facilities for 52 km long priority track works. These works will commence shortly. I wish to inform that detailed feasibility and project reports have been prepared for metro rail works for Coimbatore city also.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has framed and is implementing in this financial year, many policies like New Environment policy, Electricity Governance Initiative, Eco-Tourism policy, Information Technology policy, State Forest policy and Food Processing policy.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

For improving the investment climate for Small, Micro and Medium Industries and for ease of doing business, an internet single window portal has been created in Tamil Nadu, a first in the whole of India and approval is given speedily and easily through it for new investments. So far 329 applications have been received and permission has been given for 230 applications within 30 days; the rest of the applications are being examined. Through this, job opportunities have been created for 15,895 persons.

Orders have been issued for the creation of a nodal agency for investment development and single window clearance for MSMEs to facilitate globalization of the MSM industries in the State, enlisting overseas countries' support and attracting investment to the State. These are on the anvil.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

True to the Tourism Department's theme of 'Enchanting Tamil Nadu', the State has attracted the maximum number of inland and foreign tourists and occupies the premier position in the Country in this regard. That is why 'India Today' magazine chose Tamil Nadu as the best State in tourism and gave an award. It is no exaggeration to say that a safe environment for tourists, ancient temples, pilgrim centres and the State's culture are attracting tourists globally.

The temples of Tamil Nadu are not only places of worship but they are also treasure houses of art and culture. Realizing the great responsibility of safeguarding the temples, Hon'ble Amma's Government is implementing many schemes for the maintenance and protection of these temples. In 2017-2018, consecrations were performed to 765 temples; such consecrations will be continued this year also. As many such works are executed and maintenance works and safety measures are taken up in temples, our State has attracted more inland and foreign tourists.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

Sage Valluvar says: 'Wherever one can perform well, one should do so; in other situations also, one should act exploring other

means.' In accordance with this saying, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma acted with a determination and turned our State that was plunged in darkness, into a power surplus state and today it is offering excellent services. To help the continuation of this situation, construction works are apace for power projects with a total capacity of 6,200 MW from the time Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took over the responsibility of governance of the State. These projects include Ennore Special Economic Zone Thermal plant, North Madras Thermal Plant Stage-3, Ennore Thermal Plant Expansion Scheme, Uppur Thermal Scheme, Udangudi Thermal Plant Stage-I and Kundah pumped storage hydro-electric project.

Apart from this, I am happy to inform that Tamil Nadu remains the number one State in the Country in green energy power generation with an installed capacity of 11,750 MW.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government that has an abiding interest in the welfare of farmers, has been announcing kuruvai and samba packages for the benefit of lakhs of delta farmers whenever the opening of Mettur dam is delayed due to the failure of monsoon.

Not only this, the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme is being implemented in Tamil Nadu in an excellent way. As a result of this, Tamil Nadu stood in the forefront in getting maximum compensation for crop loss from insurance companies in 2016-2017. In that year alone, compensation to the extent of Rs.3,526.78 crore was sanctioned by the insurance companies and it was being disbursed. Likewise, for the year 2017-2018, compensation has been sanctioned for Rs.8 crore so far. In the year 2018-2019, 16.39 lakh farmers have registered themselves under the crop insurance scheme, recording an increase of 2.41 lakh over the previous year.

Hon'ble Amma's Government recently announced a Food Processing Policy for setting up big and very big Food Parks. It is also setting up producers' organizations for specific farm products and is activating them.

Through many such initiatives, Tamil Nadu recorded an achievement of crossing the 100 lakh metric tonnes mark in food grain production, 5 times in the last 7 years, as if a second green revolution is being ushered in the State and won many Central Government awards for these achievements including the highest Krishi Karman award

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Our delta Districts not only meet the food needs of the State but also supply foodgrain to other States also. To get hold of the water resources for those delta Districts, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma waged a legal battle on the Cauvery issue and the Hon'ble Supreme Court gave its final verdict last year. As per that judgment, the Cauvery Management Authority and Cauvery River Water Monitoring committee were constituted. It will be no exaggeration to say that the setting up of these two bodies not only brought cheer to delta farmers' fields but also their hearts. The Supreme Court judgment has established Tamil Nadu's rights on the Cauvery waters. The Mettur Dam reached its full storage level 4 times due to the rains in the months of July, August and September and it remained at that level for 30 days in the period

between 23.04.2018 and 06.09.2018. An I.A.S., officer has been appointed to monitor the proper use of Cauvery water for irrigation in the delta Districts.

I wish to inform that steps have been taken already to call for tenders for the implementation of the Rs.1,652 crore Athikadavu-Avinashi scheme through the State funds.

Implementation of the Kannankottai-Rajaneri Thervoy Kandigai reservoir scheme in Tiruvallur District and a new reservoir across Marudaiyaru in Perambalur District has reached the final stages. Besides, de-silting of several dams and retrieving the original levels of storage in them are going on. The enriched soil that had been deposited in lakes and dams are distributed to farmers at no cost for enriching their soil fertility.

Flood water was drained into the Cauvery river in an unprecedented scale in 2018 – that is for 30 days, continuously. This has damaged the sluices of the 182-year-old Coleroon anaicut. I personally inspected the damaged Coleroon barrage on 24.08.2018 with other Ministers and High Officials. To restore water flow in the Cauvery for irrigation, temporary repair works were taken up on a war footing in the damaged parts of the Upper Anaicut on the Coleroon and water was supplied to the Cauvery delta irrigation areas. As construction of a new barrage will take 2 years, administrative sanction was given for strengthening the present water regulator at a cost of about Rs. 39 crore. Administrative sanction was also given for setting up a new water regulator as a permanent solution at a cost of Rs. 387.60 crore.

In 2017-2018, I announced that check dams would be constructed over a period of 3 years at a cost of Rs. 1,000 crore. Approval was given for construction of 12 check dams at a cost of Rs.51.51 crore in 2017-2018 and 59 check dams so far in 2018-2019 at a cost of Rs.244.89 crore. Works are on.

A Tamil Nadu Water Resources Conservation and Rivers Restoration Corporation has been set up to further invigorate water resources through irrigation and drinking water schemes with the help of multi-national finance agencies. A Chairman cum Managing Director at the level of Principal Secretary in Government has been appointed for the corporation and it has started functioning.

To establish Tamil Nadu's rights, Hon'ble Amma's Government continues to fight for the withdrawal of the Central Government's Dam Safety legislation. I wish to assert that Tamil Nadu's rights will be upheld by stopping Kerala Government's proposed scheme to construct a new dam on Mullai Periyar River.

Tamil Nadu Members of Parliament continue to fight for the withdrawal of the permission given to Karnataka for the preparation of a detailed project report for construction of a dam at Mekedatu by prevailing upon the Central Government. Due to the heavy and continuous pressure exerted by Hon'ble Amma's Government, the Central Minister for Water Resources has stated that Karnataka cannot construct a dam at Mekedatu without the consent of Tamil Nadu.

I wish to state that in the interests of Tamils and to establish Tamil Nadu's rights as regards Mullai Periyar and Mekedatu, Hon'ble Amma's

Government will continue to take all actions besides finding legal remedies.

Hon’ble Speaker Sir,

At the centenary function of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., I announced 3 projects to fill up 60 drought-hit lakes in the Districts of Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri by conveying surplus waters from the Ennekol anaicut on the Thenpennai river. They are construction of new supply channels on either side of the anaicut, a new supply channel from the right side canal of Aliyalam anaicut and a new supply channel from the Jerdhalai canal that branches off from Chinnaru. Land acquisition of these projects will start soon. These projects will ensure irrigation to 4,737 acres of land.

In rural areas 3.20 lakh green houses have so far been constructed; in the current year 40,000 more houses are being constructed. To provide housing for migrant people, approval has been given for construction of 1,000 houses under the Green House scheme.

For the upgradaton of rural roads, Rs.1,200 crore has been allotted for the year 2018-2019 under the Tamil Nadu Rural Roads Development scheme. Besides, greater attention is bestowed on the schemes like construction of toilets in private individual houses, solid waste management and maintenance of school toilets for attaining total hygiene in Tamil Nadu.

I am happy to inform this House that Tamil Nadu has bagged many Central Government awards this year for excellent implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme.

Through the Tamil Nadu Women’s Development Corporation, 15,000 new self-help groups were set up last year. These groups are given Rs.50,000 to Rs.75,000 as community investment and economic development loan. For the Two Wheeler Scheme for Working Women, Rs.200 crore was allotted in 2017-2018 and so far subsidy had been given to 67,228 beneficiaries. Selection of beneficiaries for 2018-2019 is taking place speedily.

Hon’ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

To improve the developing Chennai Corporation’s infrastructure to global standards, roads, storm water drains, pavements and street lights have been put up. Hyacinth and other weeds floating in Buckingham canal, Adyar and Cooum rivers have been removed with imported modern machines and draining of flood waters has been ensured. Under the Chennai Smart City Programme, works like incentivizing non-motorized transport, development of water resources, construction of multi-layer vehicle parking complex and new parks have been completed or under progress. The Central Government’s approval has been obtained for smart city programmes in 10 Municipal Corporations and scheme works have commenced under the supervision of the Municipal Administration Authority.

Under the ‘Houses for All in Town Panchayat Areas’ scheme, Rs. 2,922.30 crore has been sanctioned so far to 1,39,157 eligible persons. Different types of works under this scheme are in progress.

Five large combined water supply schemes have been completed at an estimate of Rs.1,824 crore to benefit 35 lakh people in the Districts of Pudukkottai, Sivagangai, Thanjavur, Coimbatore, Dindigul, Tiruchi and Cuddalore.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

In 2018-2019 financial year, approval has been given for laying through the Highways Department roads to a length of 9,554 kms, for 1,140 road safety works, construction of storm water drainage, retaining walls, 7 railway over bridges and 80 river bridges. Also, road works to a length of 5,256 kms, construction of 47 river bridges, a road over bridge, 9 railway over bridges and one sky-walk has been completed at a cost of Rs.3,764 crore in the current year; road works are in progress to a length of 12,306 kms; works on 238 river bridges, 16 flyovers, 68 railway over bridges and 2 sky-walks are also in progress.

Preparation of a detailed project report for a Chennai-Kanniyakumari industrial corridor and converting the Tiruneveli West bypass road into a 4 lane traffic road and land acquisition for a Thanjavur-Tirukattupalli bypass road are on the anvil.

Approval for a Central Government assistance of Rs.3,462 crore has been obtained for the development of National Highways and State roads. The Central Government has also approved the upgradation of 5 State roads into National Highways in the current year. They are Pazhani-Dharapuram road, Arcot-Tindivanam road, Valliyur-Tiruchendur road, Kallakurichi-Tiruvannamalai road and Thanjavur-Kodiakkarai road.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

Realizing the importance of providing houses to people and to turn the dream of getting rid of slums in cities into a reality, Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Amma framed a Vision 2023 scheme. The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board has calculated that it needs 13.91 lakh apartments to shift the poor in urban slums. Also Hon'ble Amma's Government has got the approval for construction of 5.17 lakh apartments at a cost of Rs.21,604 crore under the Central Government's 'Housing for All' scheme and works are in progress. Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in the implementation of these works. Also, Hon'ble Amma's Government will implement with the help of the World Bank, a new scheme for construction of alternative dwelling units for people residing on the banks of waterways in Chennai Corporation areas. One of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar's film songs mentions that schemes should be designed for the poor and law should be passed to share things equally *(Thavi thavikkira ezhaikkaka thittam podanum; porulai sarisamamaa pangu vaikka sattam podanum).* In accordance with that sentiment and to benefit the middle class and the poor, Hon'ble Amma's Government has passed orders increasing the FSI (floor space index) for apartments from 1.5 to 2. For the adoption of the new index, rules have been changed. At the same time rules have been framed to detect and avert flouting of rules at the initial stage itself for ensuring building safety. To regulate building construction and layouts, a draft rule has been framed by integrating the plan permission and building rules and it is under Government's examination. This will simplify the procedure for applying and expedite grant of permission.

An e-Governance scheme is being implemented to provide quick service to people seeking the Revenue Department's help. Totally 20 types of services including issue of all kinds of certificates are given to people through this scheme.

A patta transfer scheme through internet is also being implemented in an excellent manner to simplify the work of the Village Administrative Officers, inspect farmers 'adangal' records easily, to upload and download and to provide direct service to people in respect of e-adangal scheme and patta transfer.

A special scheme to regularize encroached poramboke lands, other than the objectionable ones and issue house site pattas to the deserving poor, is also proposed to be implemented.

For easy accessibility of Revenue Department services, a new revenue division, 8 revenue taluks and one firka have been created by Hon'ble Amma's Government this year.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Last October, I inaugurated a geographic information system (GIS) portal, created jointly with Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) in Thailand to get advance information on natural disasters and an app TN – SMART. This has been introduced for the first time in India. Through this app, disaster warnings can be obtained in a short time and loss of life can be averted to a great extent.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

In the current financial year, 60 Government luxury buses and 40 long-distance air-conditioned buses, on par with private buses have been commissioned for public use. This has improved the transport service. A mofussil bus stand has been constructed at Madhavaram, Chennai at a cost of Rs.95 crore and has been put into operation.

Also in the anvil are electric and battery-operated buses in Chennai. An agreement for this between C-40 Agency, London and Hon'ble Amma's Government, I am happy to inform, was signed in March last. Hon'ble Amma's Government is also taking steps to bring in BS-VI buses here with the help of KFW bank.

Hon'ble Amma's Government is providing adequate funds for settling the long-standing financial arrears and accident compensation arrears to transport corporation employees. Also, I wish to particularly mention that the long standing pension and retirement benefits arrears were settled for transport workers after Hon'ble Amma's Government took over the administration in the State. In 2017-2018 alone, Hon'ble Amma's Government gave Rs.2,147 crore.

Without altering the nature of the universal public distribution system, Hon'ble Amma's Government is implementing the Food Safety Act excellently. Also, new electronic smart ration cards have been issued to all family card holders in the place of the old cards.

It was planned to conduct elections to co-operative societies at four levels. Elections to 17,598 primary societies have been completed in 2 stages. Elections for the 3rd and 4th levels will be conducted shortly. For other societies, elections has been postponed on account of court cases.

Last year, 5,292 metric tonnes of raw rice was issued for preparation of porridge during the Ramzan month. Rice and wheat are issued at subsidized rates through the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation for the Amma restaurants, used largely by the poor.

As the Hon'ble Governor has mentioned in his address, I am happy to inform this House that Rs.1,000 each is given to all the family card holders this year along with the usual special Pongal prize kit in connection with the Pongal festival.

For increasing agricultural production, Rs.6,025 crore has been disbursed up to 31.12.2018 in this financial year to 9,22,903 farmers through the primary agriculture co-operative credit societies.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government has brought into force the ban on single use plastic articles from the 1st of this month for improving the environment and ensuring a pollution-free Tamil Nadu for future generations. To achieve the purpose of this scheme, I am happy to inform that the people and traders have started giving full co-operation to this programme.

Hon'ble Amma's Government is creating awareness among people in this regard. The banned plastic articles will be confiscated from manufacturers and those storing them. Users of such articles will be warned appropriately and fine will be levied on those who defy the ban.

As Tamil Nadu is richly endowed in natural resources, an eco-tourism policy has been framed as per the guidelines of Hon'ble Amma's 'Vision-2023' document, for protecting the natural environment of the land. Hon'ble Amma's Government has framed new mountaineering rules for ensuring safe mountain climbing.

This Government ordered the permanent closure of Sterlite Copper Smelting Factory in Thoothukudi as it defied the environment rules. The Sterlite factory management filed a case in the Green Tribunal against the Government's order. Despite the State Government's objections, the Green Tribunal ordered the opening of the factory. Against this order, the Government, I wish to inform this House, has gone to the Supreme Court on appeal.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

In its report 'Healthy States, Progressive India', the NITI Aayog has ranked Tamil Nadu as one of the 3 top States, on account of its excellent record in health indices like infant mortality, total fertility rate and maternity morality with achievements of 17 per thousand, 1.6 per thousand and 62 per one lakh respectively. In organ donation, Tamil Nadu stands foremost in the Country.

The insurance cover under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme has been increased from Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh. By pressuring the Central Government, Hon'ble Amma's Government has got its approval for the setting up of the nationally famous AIIMS hospital at Thoppur in Madurai. The Government has been vehemently opposing the proposed Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill of the Central Government as it affects states' rights.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

The administrative set up in the school education sector has been re-structured into a 3-tier one. This year, 100 middle schools have been upgraded into high schools and 100 high schools into higher secondary schools. In the last year alone, infrastructure works like construction of additional classrooms, costing Rs.322.18 crore were undertaken. Admission

rate in primary schools has gone up to 99.86 per cent on account of the various initiatives taken by the Government. The drop-out rate has come down considerably.

Smart classes in 3,000 primary/middle schools and high tech laboratories in 6,029 high/higher secondary schools are proposed to be set up for students to improve their learning abilities, a move that is the first of its kind in the history of Tamil Nadu.

The Government has taken a policy decision to supply laptops at no cost to students from the Plus 1 class stage. The introduction of energized text books with QR Code and video visuals in Government schools, first of their kind in the State, has enabled students assimilate the ideas in the text. This has improved their learning skills and all sections of people have welcomed it.

Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir,

Steps are being taken to convert 41 University Constituent Arts and Science Colleges into Government Arts and Science Colleges at a cost of Rs.152 crore in the 2018-2019 academic year.

As a result of the implementation of such pioneering schemes by Hon'ble Amma's Government, I am proud to inform that the enrolment in higher education of boy students has risen to 49.1 per cent, girl students to 48.2 per cent and in total to 48.6 per cent, pushing the State into the premier position in the whole of India. The aim of our Higher Education Department is to make our State the Knowledge Capital and a Centre of Innovation.

Amma's Government continues to stress with the Centre to drop its Higher Education Commission of India Draft Bill and permit the existing University Grants Commission to function.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government gives priority to social welfare schemes as to education and health schemes and is implementing them.

To collect and monitor details on the balanced growth of children studying in Anganwadi Centres, touch screen mobile phones have been given to 20,150 employees in these Centres. To ensure safety of women, I inaugurated last month the 24 -hour toll free phone service – No.181. Also, 1,302 numbers of Aadhaar Registration equipment have been supplied to offices of Child Development Scheme to facilitate Aadhaar Registration on a permanent basis.

Under the Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Nutritious Meals Scheme, 51.96 lakh students – boys and girls – benefit through 43,205 nutritious meals centres. Apart from this, 1,01,119 persons have benefited through the Marriage Assistance Schemes for poor women, being implemented by Hon'ble Amma's Government.

With the noble idea that differently abled persons should get all the good things in life and live with equal rights in society, many schemes like raising their quota in jobs from 3 to 4 per cent, increasing the loan assistance for starting an enterprise for self employment to Rs.25,000 and conducting special camps for getting them jobs in the private sector, are being implemented.

For the welfare of transgenders, the subsidy for starting own unit has been increased from

Rs.20,000 to Rs.50,000; 9 transgenders have been appointed to Government service, a first in Tamil Nadu's history. Many schemes including monthly pension to 1,000 transgenders above 40 years of age are being implemented.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I convened a consultative meeting on improving efficiency and bettering job opportunities on 10.09.2018, for improving the efficiency of human resources, particularly engineering graduates. At that meeting, Hon'ble Amma's Government released the Information Technology Policy - 2018. The Policy will help the growth of IT sector and be greatly useful to attract new IT companies.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, drones, big data, unmanned aerial vehicles, augmented reality, block chain, internet of things and virtual reality are some of the new technologies for the 4th industrial revolution.

To improve services to people through new technologies and e-governance, a skill development speciality centre is proposed to be set up with Centre-State Government participation and with the help of the National e-governance set up. A control and command with Tamil Nadu GIS technology will be set up. A compilation of family data at State-level will be launched for the transparent and effective distribution of Government's various welfare measures and services.

By increasing the food allowance to students in the school hostels run by the Department of BC, MBC and De-notified Communities Welfare and fixing CCTV cameras in them, the hostels are maintained excellently. A committee has been set up to examine the various demands of the Piramalai Kallar community people. To ensure education to the poor in the Vanniyar Kula Kshatriya community and their development, Hon'ble Amma's Government has passed a legislation for the maintenance of the properties donated by philanthropists in that community; steps are taken to manage those properties.

Schemes like giving subsidy to Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem, increasing the pension to ulemas and financial assistance for repair and renovation works in churches, mosques and dargahs were implemented last year. All these are promises made by Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Amma in the election manifestoes. On this occasion, I wish to inform that Hon'ble Amma and Hon'ble Amma's Government will do what they have stated and state what they have done.

Though the Central Government has stopped the Haj subsidy, the State Government will give such subsidy. Hon'ble Amma's Government will do not only what it has stated but also what it has not stated also.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government is firmly working towards a steady growth in matters like the socio-economic development of Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes and their progress in education. The pre-matric and post-matric scholarships to students of these communities are being continued this year also.

Twenty-three hostels for Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes students have been constructed this year at a cost of Rs.26.63 crore and they are under use

now. Twenty-nine more hostels are under construction at a cost of Rs.33.83 crore. Steps are taken to provide locker facility in 1,297 functioning hostels, at a cost of Rs.25.94 crore.

To provide quality education to ST students, seven 'Ekalaiva' model residential schools have been started. Also, provision of basic facilities like compound wall, toilet and drinking water facilities and additional class rooms in the residential schools for ST students in 16 Districts including Villupuram, Dharmapuri and Namakkal, has been taken up at a cost of Rs.49.84 crore.

Hon'ble Amma's Government continues the scheme for distribution of dhotis and sarees at no cost. As announced in the 2018-2019 Budget, a new textile policy has been drafted and it is under Government's consideration. An International Textile exhibition is proposed to be held this month at the Codissia auditorium in Coimbatore city at a cost of Rs. 2 crore for encouraging textile industries growth.

The Labour Department plays an important role in accelerating the industrial and economic growth of the State. Hon'ble Amma's Government continues to work towards ensuring job, wage and community security to labour and in implementing integrated schemes after taking decisions through negotiations and consultations.

I firmly declare that this Government will continue to toil for the protection of the livelihood of workers in the fire-cracker industries.

Unemployed youth are given training in skill development for creating job opportunities for them. For this, the Tamil Nadu Government has allotted Rs.200 crore in 2018-2019. So far, 60,000 youth have been trained and 40,000 of them have got jobs. 12,000 more youths are undergoing the training.

I am happy to announce that Hon'ble Amma's Government which is greatly interested in the welfare of labour, will shortly inaugurate a scheme to supply food in Amma Restaurants at no cost to registered construction workers working in Chennai.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government that gives utmost importance to improving the welfare of sportspersons and youth, continues to offer high incentives to sportspersons from Tamil Nadu who have participated and won medals in the Olympic, Asian, Commonwealth games and national competitions. This has resulted in more sportspersons from Tamil Nadu winning medals in Asian and Commonwealth competitions held in 2018.

To attract more youth to sports and establish more and more records, Hon'ble Amma's Government has made a 3 per cent reservation for them in select Government and public sector jobs on the basis of merit. To frame rules for this, a committee headed by the Chief Secretary to Government has been formed. Those rules will be published shortly.

The quick action taken by the Department of Commercial Taxes helped traders shift without difficulty from VAT and other tax laws to the Goods and Services Tax system. Due to the successful implementation of GST, Tamil Nadu is in the second place among States least compensated. This shows Tamil Nadu's efficiency.

Due to the clear expositions of Hon'ble Amma's Government at GST Council meetings, the GST tax has been reduced on 53 commodities.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has put into effect a new website based software Star 2.0 for the registration of property documents. Star 2.0 Phase 2 has extended the registration facility to marriage, association, chit and partnership companies besides property. These services have greatly benefited the people.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

The Lok Ayukta Act 2018 has been passed and brought into effect from 13.11.2018. I am happy to inform this House that the process of appointing the chairman and members for the body will be completed soon and it will start functioning shortly.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has extended the age eligibility for the examinations conducted by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission for group 1, 1-A and 1-B posts from the present 35 to 37 for the SC/ST/MBC/BC and DNC communities and for the rest from 30 to 32.

As for the demand of various Government employees associations that the old pension scheme should be revived in the place of the new participatory pension scheme, a one man commission has been set up with the retired I.A.S., officer Thiru.T. S.Sridhar to examine the possibilities of the demand. The Commission presented its report to the Government on 27.11.2018. It will be examined and suitable action will be taken.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Amma's Government speedily implemented the recommendations of the 7th Pay Commission to Government employees, teachers and to the staff of Local Bodies. To remove the anomalies Hon'ble Amma's Government appointed a one-man commission. It completed its enquiry and submitted its recommendation to the Government on 05.01.2019. I wish to inform that the Government will take appropriate action on it.

The new medical insurance scheme for pensioners has been extended for 4 more years with additional special features.

Steps are being taken to implement an integrated financial and human resources management scheme to turn Government's revenues into electronic revenue in real time, to maintain in a simplified way the service register of 9 lakh Government employees and to improve the financial and human resources management. I will inaugurate this scheme soon. As there is a possibility of great loss of funds to Tamil Nadu if the 2011 census figures are used in the terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission, Tamil Nadu has been insisting on the use of 1971 census figures for the terms of reference. I expect the Commission to accept this request and recommend fund sharing among States.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Like the creation of a Chair for Tamil in Harvard University in the US by donating funds, steps will be taken to set up Chairs for the Tamil language in educational institutions in foreign Countries and other States where Tamils live in large numbers. Funds have been allocated

for setting up a Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Arts and Social Development Research Chair at the International Institute of Tamil Studies with a corpus of Rs.1 crore. Two new awards have been instituted in the names of Maraimalai Adigalar, father of the Pure Tamil Movement and Ayothidasa Pandithar, Tamil scholar. The works of three Tamil scholars who have brought glory to Tamil, have also been nationalized.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has issued orders for the installation of a portrait of Thiru. Ramasamy Padayachiyar, a savant of social justice in the Legislative Assembly; a Manimandapam is being constructed for him at Cuddalore. Steps are taken to construct a Manimandapam for Dr. Sivanthi Adithanar at Tiruchendur, Thoothukudi District and a Bharata Maatha temple at Paapparapatti, Pennagaram, Dharmapuri District.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has ordered the celebration as Government function, of the birth anniversary of Thiru. Ramasamy Padayachiyar on September 16 and the birth anniversary of Nadigar Thilagam Sivaji Ganesan who had rendered great service in the field of art, on October 1. These functions are being celebrated. I wish to inform that steps will be taken for the presentation of Kalaimamani awards for those belonging to the field of art and also awards for film and TV artistes.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Through the Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. centenary functions, held in all the 32 Districts beginning with Madurai and ending in Kanniyakumari, foundation stones have been laid for 3,214 works valued at Rs.5,744.24 crore and 2,370 new scheme works, valued at Rs.5,158.97 crore have been inaugurated. Totally 568 announcements were made and of them GOs have been issued for 496. Out of these 496 announcements, projects for 46 announcements have been executed fully; and for the rest of 446 announcements, scheme works are in progress.

For the remaining 74 announcements (out of the total of 568), preliminary works have been taken up and two are under the Central Government's consideration.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government made 1,055 announcements in the Assembly under Rule 110 in the years 2011 to 2016. Of these, orders were issued for 1,039 and of them, works were completed in 754; works are in progress in 301.

I made 259 such announcements in the Assembly in the years 2017 to 2019; of these, GOs have been issued for 221 announcements; works on 38 have been completed; they are in progress for 191 announcements and for the remaining 30, steps are under way to issue Government orders.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

In the State, a white revolution was ushered in through the distribution of cows at no cost, a brain child of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Under this scheme, cows have been distributed to 76,836 rural women so far, leading to a milk production of 2.66 lakh litres per day; besides, 1.66 lakh calves have also been born.

To reduce milk producers' difficulties, new milk producers' co-operative unions have been started at Namakkal and Tiruppur. Hon'ble Amma's Government has set a record production of 37 lakh litres milk in a day.

Aavin milk and milk products are exported to Singapore and Hong Kong for sale.

Through the scheme of distribution at no cost of goats/sheep, 36,54,316 goats/sheep have been distributed till date to 9,13,570 beneficiaries. I am happy to inform this House that they have given birth to 71,33,690 offspring.

Through the poultry development programme, 2,961 broiler chicken farms and 18,545 Country poultry farms have been set up and the scheme has now been extended throughout the State to provide livelihood to 77,000 rural poor.

Relief to Okhi cyclone affected fishermen was disbursed immediately. Besides giving a relief amount of Rs.20 lakh each to the bereaved families of 204 fishermen who had died/ were missing, the eligible heirs of 159 fishermen were also given jobs in Government Departments. Relief was also provided for the damages caused to their boats; the Government took several pioneering measures to protect their livelihood.

To communicate to fisherfolks engaged in deep sea fishing during natural disasters, deep sea communication equipment (NaVIC-Navigation with Indian Constellation) are being supplied to them. Also, steps are being taken to supply satellite phone and 'NaVTEX' (Navigational telex) radio equipment.

By way of reducing sea erosion, a groyne will be set up in Pozhikkarai village, Kesavanputhenthurai Panchayat, Kaniyakumari District in deference to the requests made by people there.

I wish to inform this House that till our Idaya Deivam's goal of 'Retrieval of Katchatheevu' is attained, Hon'ble Amma's Government will continue to wage a court battle.

(Hon'ble Deputy Leader of the Opposition makes a request that the essays and books of Thiru. Iravatham Mahadevan should be nationalized and published).

Hon'ble Deputy Leader of the Opposition has put in a good suggestion. Through you (Speaker Sir), I wish to inform him that Government will examine the suggestion.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

This Government is vigorously working to take all sections of people on the path of progress by effectively implementing the pioneering schemes of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and attending to the different sections of society like providing nutrition for just-born babies, paying attention to their hygiene, giving importance to students education and encouraging them and designing various schemes for their higher education. Moreover, Tamil Nadu has attained inclusive growth as it offers different types of training to educated youth for increasing their job potential and creates the proper environment for industrial growth for providing jobs to them.

I wish to mention here how other States are adopting the schemes being implemented by Hon'ble Amma's Government and how the schemes are being appreciated at the national level. To make a particular mention, the Sustainable Development Goal Index 2018, released by NITI Aayog, has noted that Tamil Nadu is a model State in attaining the growth targets fixed by the United Nations for

the year 2030. I am proud to inform this House that Tamil Nadu is in the forefront, particularly in poverty eradication, supply of pure renewable energy and in overall performance. The Public Affairs Centre in Bengaluru, in its report for the year 2018, has also ranked Tamil Nadu as the second best State in governance.

Hon'ble Governor's Address has mentioned that I have so far examined 11,286 files and passed orders. I don't consider signing these files as an achievement; as Chief Minister it is my duty. I am happy not about the number of files signed but I am happy that every file is for according approval for development schemes, providing a good solution to problems and for welfare programmes that benefit the Tamil community in a comprehensive manner.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma functioned with rapid development as her goal. This Government that follows her 'taraka' mantra of peace, prosperity, progress as well as her policies, is finding solutions to the State's diverse needs, speedily and responsibly. People know this well.

This Government gives utmost importance to law and order. Tamil Nadu has risen as the Premier State because Hon'ble Amma's Government is functioning calmly, without any fuss, but with stability. The awards given by the English magazine 'India Today' to Tamil Nadu for best performance in the maintenance of law and order, achieving this in a short time, in tourism and in overall performance, are proof of the Tamil Nadu Government's record.

As far as we are concerned, we follow the path of Hon'ble Amma, we pursue her policies and serve the people calmly and quietly and we consider this as our duty. At the same time, I want to give the assurance that Hon'ble Amma's Government will always protect the interests of the people of Tamil Nadu .

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

As per Article 176(1) of the Indian Constitution, Hon'ble Governor should deliver an address at the beginning of each year after the conclusion of the general election, mentioning last year's achievements of the Government, Government's stand on important issues and outlining how Government will function in future. In DMK's rule also, this was followed. On 23.06.2016, Hon'ble Amma said in her speech in this House that Governor's Address was not a big compilation of everything that the Government aimed to do. It was only an outline. This procedure was followed in your rule, why, even in Congress rule. According to the Government's policies mentioned in the Governor's Address, funds would be allotted to each department in the Budget and in the Demands for Grants that follow. Kaul and Shakdher have echoed this viewpoint in their book on Parliament procedure. During the debate on the Governor's Address, I myself and Ministers give appropriate explanations. Also, my reply covers all points clearly.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

When the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition concluded his speech yesterday, he drew a comparison between a poet who conveyed the one word 'Aranganathan' in an 8-line quiz verse and the Governor's speech that according to him conveyed 'nothing' in a circuitous way in 52 pages. As Valluvar has

stated, one should thoroughly examine what has been said and come to the right conclusion. (‘Epporul yaar yaar vaai ketipinum apporul maipporul kaanpatharivu’)

Five blind people went to inspect an elephant. The person who touched the elephant’s leg said the elephant was fat. The person who grabbed the tail was of the opinion that the elephant was lean. The third, who felt the stomach, believed that the elephant was like a pot. The fourth who ran his hands over the elephant’s ear, opined that it was flat, while the fifth person touched its tusk and concluded that the elephant was sharp! The significance of the story is that if one does not get the whole picture, things will appear according to one’s own splintered thoughts. I feel the Leader of the Opposition is in such a situation.

The Leader of the Opposition said that this Government was a zero. I wish to recall one thing in this House. On 16.02.2017, when I assumed office as Chief Minister, certain persons predicted that this Government would not last even for 10 days. But Hon’ble Amma’s Government has endured not just for 10 days or 100 days but more than 100 days; it has crossed 700 days and is successfully serving the people. As a result of this Government, Tamil Nadu has won many awards and laurels. From this, people will understand well which is a zero and who is a zero!

The Leader of the Opposition stated that this Government was a zero but the fact is that it has functioned for days whose number has two zeroes in it. Hon’ble Amma’s good rule will continue and cross the number of days with three and four digit zeroes.

Hon’ble Leader of the Opposition has described Hon’ble Governor’s Address as a riddle. But, since people know very well about Hon’ble Amma’s Government, its achievements continue to be a serial saga. I wish to assert at this juncture that Hon’ble Amma’s Government will endure and function ably with the sole goal of the welfare of the people of Tamil Nadu.

Hon’ble Speaker Sir,

Hon’ble Minister for Law Thiru. C.V.Shanmugam and Ulundurpet MLA Thiru. Kumaraguru told me that people are placing a demand for the bifurcation of Villupuram District as it is a big one. After examining the demand, it has been decided to divide Villupuram District and create a new District with Kallakurichi as Headquarters for administrative convenience. For this District, an I.A.S., officer will shortly be appointed as a Special Officer.

Hon’ble Speaker Sir,

Hon’ble members have expressed their views on the Hon’ble Governor’s address. I believe I have given an adequate reply in my speech. If any of their demands have been left out, Government will take note of them and take appropriate steps as per rules. I request Hon’ble Members to unanimously pass the motion of thanks to the Hon’ble Governor’s Address. Conveying my pleasant Pongal greetings to the Hon’ble Speaker Sir, Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister, Hon’ble Ministers, Hon’ble Deputy Speaker Sir and Hon’ble members, I resume my seat.

Nandri! Vanakkam!.

■

Deep condolence to the 12 former members of the Legislative Assembly

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** on the condolence motion moved in the Assembly on 03.01.2019 (English Translation).

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

My deep sense of condolence to the 12 former members of the Legislative Assembly who had performed well and died. I convey my deep sense of condolence on the demise of former Prime Minister of India Thiru. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He was elected to Parliament many times and served it in an excellent way. A senior leader of Bharatiya Janata Party, he was the first person of the party to be elected as Prime Minister of India.

Likewise, I express my condolences for the former Governor of Tamil Nadu, former Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the famous industrial wizard. The late 'Nel' Jayaraman was a well-known person to delta farmers. The name 'Nel' Jayaraman evoked appreciation as one who was of great help to people in the agriculture sector. I convey my condolence on this occasion over the demise of Nel Jayaraman who was a model for farmers.

Dr. S. Jayaraman Jayachandran had earned a name for offering medical assistance to the poor at cheap cost. I condole his death. My deep condolences to the families of all those who died due to the 'gaja' cyclone two months ago.

The late Thiru. A.K. Bose joined the AIADMK when Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. started the party in 1972; he was closely associated with Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and worked enthusiastically in the volunteer corps. After the demise of M.G.R., he did party work in an excellent manner, endeared himself to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and got an opportunity to contest the Madurai Lok Sabha seat in 2004. In the 2006 by-election for Thirupparamkundram, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma fielded him as the party candidate and he won the seat and served the people well. He was the Chairman of the party's District presidium of Madurai City and was appointed later by Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma as the party's Madurai City District Secretary. In 2011, he was announced as the party's candidate for the Madurai North constituency, won the seat and functioned as an MLA in an excellent manner. In the 2016 Thirupparamkundram by-election, he was named as the party's candidate by Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and he won the election and was serving well. He was highly loyal to Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and party leadership . Even when the party was in the Opposition, his work was appreciated by many. He participated in all the agitations of the party and went to jail many times. He was a person who could move with party volunteers and the general public in a friendly manner and with simplicity. Following indisposition, he was admitted to a private hospital in Madurai on 01.08.2018 (Wednesday) and died in the early hours of the morning of 02.08.2018 without responding to treatment. The death of Thiru. Bose, MLA has caused great pain to the party and is a great loss. I convey my deep sense of condolence and sympathy to his bereaved family.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

At the outset, I convey my deep condolences over the demise of Tamil Nadu's former Chief Minister, senior-most politician of India, President of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam for 50 years and Member of the Legislative Assembly, Thiru. M.Karunanidhi.

In 1937, the Justice Party launched a series of agitations when Hindi was made a compulsory subject of study in Government schools. Thiru. Karunanidhi, who was 13 years old then, was attracted by these agitations. He collected his school friends and started a movement under the name 'Ilaignar Marumalarchi Amaippu' (Youth Renaissance Forum). He conducted anti-Hindi demonstrations. To organize students for the struggle, he started a hand-written magazine in the name 'Maanava Nesan' (Friend of Students) at that young age. He was elected the President of the Maanavar Mandram.

An article 'Sacrifice of Youth' ('Ilamai Bali') written by him was published in the Dravida Nadu magazine published by Perarignar Anna in 1942. Greatly drawn by that article, Perarignar Anna, who was on a visit to Thiruvarur for a function, called him and praised him.

Former Chief Minister Kalaignar entered the Tamil Nadu Assembly as Member in 1957 for the first time and got elected to the forum 13 times and once to the Legislative Assembly Council and functioned very well. When Perarignar Anna became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in 1967, he became the Transport and Public works Minister and discharged his Ministerial responsibilities very skillfully.

In 1969, he became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. He has the honour of being the

Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu 5 times. Apart from politics, he showed his talent in Tamil literature, screenplay and dialogue writing in Tamil films and created social awareness. The former Chief Minister Kalaignar left his unique imprint in all genres of literature – drama, poetry, essay, short story, novel and history. ‘Pazhaniappan’ was the first drama Kalaignar wrote. The maiden launch of that drama took place in Tiruvarur. He wrote many dramas inclusive of ‘Thookkumedai’, ‘Silappadhikaram’, ‘Manimakudam’ ‘Ore Rattham’, ‘Kagitthappoo’, ‘Naane Arivaali’, ‘Vellikizhamai’, ‘Thiruvalar Desiyampillai’, ‘Anarkali’, ‘Samrat Asokan’ ‘Cheran Senguttuvan’. Thiru. M.R. Radha who was pleased with the drama ‘Thookku Medai’ bestowed the title ‘Kalaignar’ on him.

He has written more than 100 short stories including ‘Nalaayini’ and ‘Pazhakkoodai’ and novels like ‘Pudaiyal’, ‘Vaankozhi’, ‘Surilimalai’, ‘Oru Maram Pootthathu’, ‘Ore Rattham’, ‘Romaapuri Pandian’, ‘Thenpaandi Singam’ and ‘Ponnar Sankar’. The ‘Thenpaandi Singam’, novel got the ‘Rajarajan Award’ of the Thanjavur Tamil University for the year 1989. ‘Kuraloviyam’, a research work on Thirukkural in simple style, is Kalaignar’s most important literary work. He has detailed his life events in six volumes under the title ‘Nenjukku Needhi’.

Kalaignar has written 178 works including ‘Sangaththamizh’, ‘Tholkaappia Poonga’, ‘Iniyavai Erupadhu’, ‘Medaiyile Veesiya Mellia Poongaatru’, ‘Malarum Ninaivugal’, ‘Kalaignarin Kavidhai Mazhai’ and ‘Ilaya Samudhayam Ezhugave’. His contribution to Tamil is immense.

He has left his imprint not only in Tamil Nadu politics but also at the all-India level also. His contributions as Chief Minister and as Leader of Opposition are praiseworthy. On behalf of AIADMK , we have welcomed in the interest of people, some schemes, legislations and actions initiated during his rule. At the same time, we have opposed if we have differed on policy issues. Kalaignar was the Chief Minister when Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the present Hon’ble Leader of the Opposition and myself got elected and entered the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly for the first time in 1989.

In that Assembly session, MLA Thiru. R.Singaram said in his speech, “An announcement has been made here that Rs.50,000 will be given in the event of a member’s death. This meets only half of our goal (‘Latchiyam’). Our goal is one lakh (‘Latcham’). Our Chief Minister is waiting to make that announcement of Rs.1 lakh in the coming Assembly session and many more announcements also.” In a quick retort, the then Chief Minister Kalaignar said: “My long standing wish (“Latchiyam”) is, that Member Thiru. Singaram should live long, for a long time, (‘Pallaandu’), for a very very long number of years and thousands and thousands of years”. Though the former Chief Minister did not concede the request, he had the talent of giving a pleasing reply to the member.

When Kalaignar Karunanidhi was admitted to the Kauvery hospital, I, the Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister and other Ministers visited the hospital and enquired about his health. At a time when we were all expecting him to recover and continue his political activities as his ailment was only age-related, the news that he had passed away shocked us all. I, Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister and Hon’ble Speaker of

the Assembly paid our last respects to former Chief Minister Kalaignar in person.

Former Chief Minister Kalaignar's multi-faceted abilities formed the basis of his political life. He exhibited himself as a rationalist through the film 'Parasakthi', for which he wrote the dialogues. In all the films he wrote dialogues later, he recorded ideas of social awareness. He scripted the story and wrote dialogues for more than 75 films like 'Rajakumari', 'Malaikallan', 'Thirumbipaar', ' Raja Rani', 'Mandhiri Kumari', 'Poompuhar', 'Manohara', 'Pudhumaipitthan', 'Arasilangkumari', 'Iruvar Ullam', 'Engal Thangam' and 'Kuravanji'. A film was produced, based on his novel 'Ponnar Sankar' with the same title. He was endowed with the qualities of simplicity, pleasant manners and inclusiveness.

He has the distinction of knowing all the Prime Ministers of India – from the first one Thiru. Jawaharlal Nehru to the present Thiru. Narendra Modi. One is born, lives and dies but one's achievements in that life time remain permanently. In that way, Kalaignar's achievements will remain permanently in this soil. Once again, I convey my deep condolences on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government. I take my seat, expressing deep condolences to the bereaved Leader of the Opposition, his family members, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, executives and volunteers of his party. Vanakkam.

137th Birth Anniversary of Mahakavi Bharathiyar

In connection with the 137th Birth Anniversary of Mahakavi Bharathiyar, Hon'ble Ministers Thiru. D. Jayakumar (Fisheries, Personnel and Administrative Reforms), Thiru. Kadambur Raju (Information and Publicity), Thiru. Benjamin (Rural Industries), Thiru. S.R. Vijayakumar, MP, and Tmt. B. Valarmathi, Chairperson of Tamil Nadu Text Book and Educational Services Corporation, Thiru. R. Venkatesan I.A.S., Secretary, Department of Tamil Development and Information and Public Relations, Dr. P. Sankar I.A.S., Director, Department of Information and Public Relations and Thiru. OL. Ravindran Additional Director, on behalf of Tamil Nadu Government, paid floral tribute to his portrait, kept near his statue on Kamarajar Salai at Chennai on 11.12.2018.

A thousand rupees with gift hamper, to celebrate Pongal joyously

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami distributed at the Secretariat on 05.01.2019, an additional Government Pongal gift of Rs.1,000 besides the usual gift pack, to 10 families to mark the inauguration of its distribution in the State.

For the celebration of the Pongal festival, a gift hamper, comprising a kg of raw rice, a kg of sugar, a two- foot-long piece of sugarcane, 20 grams of cashew nut, 20 grams of raisins and 5 grams of cardamom is distributed to family card holders and Sri Lankan Tamils staying in camps, to benefit 2,01,91,054 families. The additional Pongal gift of Rs.1,000 is given this year for people to celebrate the festival in a grand manner and it will cover 1,97,98,102 families in the State, barring those in Tiruvarur District (on account of the declaration of a by-election there).

Thai Pongal festival is happily celebrated by Tamils all over the world. On 22.12.2018, the Hon'ble Chief Minister announced that the Pongal gift package will be distributed through Fair Price Shops to all family card holders and Sri Lankan Tamil families, well before the festival. The Tamil Nadu Government that functions on the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has allotted Rs.258 crore for the distribution of this gift package.

The Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, in his address to the Legislative Assembly on 02.01.2019, announced that the Tamil Nadu government would give Rs.1,000 to every family in the State, barring those in Tiruvarur District in view of the by-election there and as per the conduct of Election rules.

Accordingly, the Hon'ble Chief Minister distributed the additional gift of Rs.1,000 (besides the usual gift package) to 10 families as a token to mark the distribution of Rs.1,000 to 1,97,98,102 families in districts other than Tiruvarur. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also extended Pongal greetings to all persons on the occasion. ■

Tamil Nadu Assembly passes unanimous resolution against move for Mekedatu dam

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** in the Assembly moving the special resolution. (English Translation)

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

I bow to 'Deiva Thirumagal' Hon'ble Amma who waged a war for over a quarter century to retrieve Tamil Nadu's rights on Cauvery, won and made agriculture flourish.

At a time when we were all expecting, after a long legal battle, Tamil Nadu's share of water in the Cauvery, the act of Central Water Resources Commission to grant permission on 22.11.2018 to Karnataka Government to prepare a detailed project report for construction of a dam at Mekedatu in Karnataka has made us all fume in indignation. Everyone in Tamil Nadu opposes it strongly. In this situation, I wish to move this motion, brought in by Hon'ble Amma's Government to emphasise the interests of all the people of Tamil Nadu, to reflect the State's stand and to unitedly reflect our feelings, opposition and condemnation. I request Hon'ble Members, through you, (Speaker) to express their views on this resolution and pass it unanimously.

RESOLUTION: This House conveys its strong condemnation and protest against the permission granted by the Central Water Resources Commission to the Karnataka Government on 22.11.2018 to prepare a detailed project report for construction of a new dam at Mekedatu, without taking into account the resolutions passed unanimously on 05.12.2014 and 27.03.2015 with the guidance of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in this House and in contravention of the observation made in the Supreme court judgment that the Karnataka Government should not implement any scheme without the prior permission of the lower riparian states. It also condemns the moves of the Karnataka Government to start preliminary works for construction of Mekedatu dam.

This House strongly urges the Central Water Resources Ministry to direct the Central Water Resources Commission to withdraw its permission. This House requests the Central Government to direct Karnataka Government not to undertake any construction works either on its own or by any of its institutions in the Cauvery basin at Mekedatu or at any other place in a way as to thwart the final order of the Cauvery Tribunal and Supreme Court judgment and without the consent of Tamil Nadu. I move this resolution.

Hon'ble Chief Minister graphically delineates State's continuing struggle for Cauvery water

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 06.12.2018, proposing the special resolution, urging the Central Government to direct the Central Water Resources Commission to withdraw its permission to the Karnataka Government for preparing a detailed project report for construction of a new dam at Mekedatu (English Translation)

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

The 1892 and 1924 agreements between (the then) Madras Presidency and Mysore State clearly establishes Tamil Nadu's rights on the Cauvery river waters. As a lower riparian State, Tamil Nadu has greater rights on the Cauvery River Waters. The Cauvery river is the lifeline of the people of the delta Districts and fulfills the drinking water needs of more than 20 Districts.

However, Karnataka took steps to construct many dams in the late 1960s and early 1970s in contravention of the clauses of the Cauvery river water agreements. The extent of irrigated land was 3.101 lakh acres in 1901 but it rose to 11.20 lakh acres after construction of Hemavathi, Kabini and Harangi dams. It further rose to 14.10 lakh acres in 2001. Karnataka increased the extent of irrigated land to about

27 lakh acres by utilizing the Cauvery basin water in many ways without obtaining consent from any one. But the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal, fixed the extent of Cauvery basin irrigation in Karnataka as 18.85 lakh acres by accepting Tamil Nadu's strong arguments. The Supreme Court also confirmed this. However, Karnataka, defying this order, continued to expand its irrigated area. In connection with this and by way of compensating the loss sustained by Tamil Nadu on account of non-release of Cauvery river water, Hon'ble Amma, filed a case in the Supreme Court, claiming damages of Rs.2,479 crore.

To bring the curtain down on the Cauvery water dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka States, the Government headed by Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. requested the Central Government in 1986 to set up a Tribunal under the 1956 Inter-State River Water Disputes Act. The Central Government, however, did not take any steps on this.

The Tamil Nadu Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Protection Association filed a case in the Supreme Court in respect of this issue. On the orders of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R, the Tamil Nadu Government impleaded itself in the case. The Supreme Court directed the setting up of a Tribunal in 1990 for resolving the Cauvery water dispute. By way of reviving the Tamil Nadu Government's letter sent in 1986, during MGR's regime, that letter was included in the notification issued by the Central Government and was sent to the Cauvery Tribunal.

On 25.06.1991, the Tribunal issued an interim order, directing Karnataka to release water from its reservoirs so as to ensure receipt of 205 t.m.c. ft. of water at Mettur dam; the release should be on monthly and weekly basis and that the interim order would be in force till the final verdict was delivered.

The Karnataka Government issued an ordinance against this interim order. His Excellency the President of India referred the matter to the Supreme Court for its opinion. After hearing the case, the Supreme Court, on the basis of the brilliant exposition of Tamil Nadu Government, opined on 22.11.1991 that the Tribunal's interim order was valid, it should be published in the Central Government gazette and that the Karnataka Government's ordinance was invalid. On that basis, the Central Government published the Tribunal's interim order in its gazette. Only due to Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's firm action, this interim order was published in Central Government's gazette and Tamil Nadu's rights established.

Though the interim order was published in Central Government gazette, Tamil Nadu Government filled a civil suit in the Supreme Court in 1992 on the orders of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, as no machinery was set up to implement that order. On 11.08.1998, the Central Government set up two bodies – Cauvery River Authority and Cauvery Water Monitoring Committee. Tamil Nadu did not benefit out of these two bodies.

The Tribunal gave its final verdict on 05.02.2007, fixing water yield in Cauvery at 740 t.m.c. ft. and apportioning the same as 419 t.m.c. ft. of water to Tamil Nadu, 270 t.m.c. ft. to Karnataka, 30 t.m.c. ft. to

Kerala, 7 t.m.c. ft. to Puducherry, 4 t.m.c. ft. as inevitable surplus and 10 t.m.c. ft. water for environment protection. It also recommended the setting up of a Cauvery Management Board and a Cauvery Water Monitoring Committee for the proper implementation of the final verdict.

The Cauvery basin is a deficit basin. In its final judgment, the Tribunal has clearly mentioned that the existing dams are enough for storing and releasing water and that consent of the lower riparian states should be obtained even before examining implementation of any project in principle.

Following reports in newspapers that Karnataka Government was taking efforts to implement unilaterally Sivasamudram run-of-the-river hydroelectricity project and Mekedatu hydroelectric project, the Tamil Nadu Government filed an interim petition in the Supreme Court, objecting to the implementation of these two projects unilaterally by Karnataka.

After assuming office as Chief Minister in 2011, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma met the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India at New Delhi on 14.11.2011 and urged for the publication of the final judgment of the Cauvery Tribunal in the Central Government's gazette and the setting up of the Cauvery Management Board and the Cauvery Water Monitoring committee for implementing the verdict. The Central Government turned a deaf ear despite Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's insistence on this, through letters.

When newspapers reported that the Karnataka Government was proceeding to implement Sivasamudram and Mekedatu hydroelectric projects unilaterally, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma firmly told this House on 30.03.2012 that the Karnataka Government could not construct new dams without the consent of Tamil Nadu and that if the Karnataka Government made any such attempt, Tamil Nadu would not allow it.

Later, the Cauvery Tribunal's final verdict was published in the Central Government's gazette due to the sagacious steps taken by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and the Supreme Court's intervention and Tamil Nadu's rights on the Cauvery issue were affirmed.

Despite the publication of the final judgment of the Cauvery Tribunal in the Central Government gazette, that Central Government did not constitute the Cauvery Management Board and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee. Hence, the Tamil Nadu Government, on the orders of Puratchi thalaivi Amma, filed an interim petition in the Supreme Court on 18.03.2013, seeking a direction to the Central Government to set up these two bodies. The Supreme Court heard the petition on 10.05.2013 and ordered the constitution of a Cauvery Monitoring Committee, headed by the Secretary of the Central Ministry for Water Resources and with Chief Secretaries of States as members, as a temporary arrangement till the constitution of the Cauvery Management Board, for the implementation of the Tribunal's final order, published in the Central Government Gazette on 19.02.2013. As per this order, the Central Government set up a Monitoring Committee.

Even as State Governments' appeal petitions were pending in the Supreme Court, there was a newspaper report that the

Karnataka Government was taking up through an organization, Cauvery Neeravari Nigamam, Mekedatu hydroelectric and many other projects. Following this, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, through letters of 02.09.2013 and 03.09.2013 to Hon'ble Prime Minister, stressed that Karnataka should be advised not to take up these projects without the prior permission of Tamil Nadu Government and that the Central Environment and Forest Ministry should stop giving permission to any projects of Karnataka till the setting up and functioning of Cauvery Management Board on a permanent basis. This was followed up with letters to the Karnataka Chief Secretary and Secretary to Central Water Resources Ministry on 06.09.2013 and 17.09.2013 respectively.

In its response letter of 07.10.2013, the Central Water Resources Ministry informed that no request seeking technical and economic clearance for a detailed project report for Sivasamudram and Mekedatu projects was received at the Central Water Resources Commission and that appropriate steps were being taken for the constitution of Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee. On 09.10.2013, a letter was again sent to the Central Government to advise Karnataka not to take up these projects till the appeal petitions were disposed of.

As the setting up of the Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee would be the permanent arrangement for Tamil Nadu to get water on a monthly basis, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma met the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 03.06.2014, presented a memorandum of demands and gave a detailed explanation.

There were reports that the Karnataka Government proposed to construct two dams at Mekedatu under the cloak of drinking water scheme without mentioning anything about hydroelectric projects and had sought Expression of Interest for preparing a technical feasibility report. Following this, in a letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 12.11.2013, Hon'ble Prime Minister's intervention was sought on this issue for stopping such activities of the Karnataka Government and a request was made to advise Karnataka Government not to take up any irrigation, hydroelectric and water pumping schemes as also any other scheme under the guise of drinking water supply without the consent of Tamil Nadu. That letter further requested that the Central Ministries of Environment and Forests as also that of Water Resources not to give approval to any project of the Karnataka Government without getting the consent of Tamil Nadu.

On the guidance of Hon'ble Amma, the Tamil Nadu Government filed an interim petition in the Supreme Court on 18.11.2014, seeking a direction to Karnataka Government to withdraw its notice of Expression of Interest for a technical survey for construction of two dams, not to take up construction of these two dams or any other new project in contravention of the schemes mentioned in the Cauvery Tribunal's final verdict and continuation of the status quo till the setting up of the Cauvery Management board and the disposal of the cases pending in the Supreme Court.

In its letter dated 18.11.2014, the Karnataka Government informed the Tamil Nadu Government that it had already stated in its interim petition pending in the

court that it would not implement this project without informing the Supreme court.

To prevent execution of the above mentioned projects unilaterally taken up by Karnataka Government, a resolution was passed in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 05.12.2014 and forwarded to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for appropriate action.

A letter was sent to the Central Ministry of Environment and Forest on 05.01.2015 emphasizing that permission should not be granted to any scheme undertaken by Karnataka Government without getting the views of Tamil Nadu Government. Also, a letter was sent to Hon'ble Prime Minister on 21.03.2015, pointing out allocation of funds made by the Karnataka Government in its Budget for 2015-2016 for preparation of a detailed project report for construction of a dam at Mekedatu. In that letter, it was stressed that Karnataka Government's unilateral action was totally in contravention of the final verdict of Cauvery Tribunal and it would affect the inflows into Tamil Nadu and that the Karnataka Government should be advised not to take up construction of dams illegally at Mekedatu or implementation of any other scheme without the approval of Tamil Nadu Government. The letter also regretted that the Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee had not been constituted despite several strong reminders by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and sought that the Central Water Resources Ministry be advised to set up these bodies without further delay.

In the absence of any response to the resolution passed by this House on 05.12.2014 and the strong pleas made to the Central Government constantly by Tamil Nadu, a request was made in the Supreme Court on 26.03.2015 for an immediate hearing of the petition, filed already by Tamil Nadu Government, pointing out the allocation of Rs.25 crore by the Karnataka Government for the preparation of a detailed project report for construction of a dam at Mekedatu.

In this situation, this House discussed on 27.03.2015, the Karnataka Government's move to construct a dam at Mekedatu and passed a resolution unanimously. The resolution urged the Central Government to take appropriate steps immediately to prevent Karnataka from preparing a detailed project report for construction of a new dam at Mekedatu, to advise the Karnataka Government appropriately that it should not take any step to implement any scheme like a dam/reservoir at Mekedatu till the Cauvery Management Board came into operation and without getting Tamil Nadu's permission, and to immediately set up the Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee.

A delegation of 55 members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry met the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 28.03.2015 and handed over the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's letter, seeking immediate action on this resolution. The Hon'ble Prime Minister informed the MPs that he had already instructed the Department concerned to collect all details about the present position and assured to look into the issue.

Also, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu met the Hon'ble Prime Minister

on 25.04.2015 and presented a detailed letter requesting that Karnataka Government should be advised not to implement the Mekedatu scheme. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma met the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 07.08.2015 and 14.06.2016 and stressed that that the Karnataka Government should not be permitted to implement the Mekedatu scheme.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma firmly told this House on 18.08.2016, while making a statement under Rule 110 that the Tamil Nadu Government would take all legal steps to establish the State's rights if the Karnataka Government proposed to implement any scheme across the Cauvery river, including the Mekedatu dam, in contravention of the final order of the Cauvery Tribunal and without getting the consent of the Tamil Nadu Government.

On 19.12.2016, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu met the Hon'ble Prime Minister and presented a petition against construction of a dam at Mekedatu by the Karnataka Government.

In the meanwhile, all the States and Central Government argued in the Supreme Court, the admissibility of the civil suits filed by the State Governments and the court ruled on 09.12.2016 that the suits were fit for hearing. From July 2017 to September 2017, final rounds of arguments took place in the Supreme court. In this period, the Karnataka Government argued for 9 days, the Kerala Government for 2 days, the Tamil Nadu Government for 13 days and Puducherry and Central Government, one day each. The Supreme Court gave its verdict on 16.2.2018 after hearing the arguments. The salient features of the Judgment are as follows:

• The judgment re-affirms the Supreme Court's 1991 view that inter-state rivers are National assets and no single State can claim exclusive rights over them.

• Karnataka's contention that the 1892 and 1924 agreements are infructuous has not been accepted.

• The Karnataka Government argued before the Cauvery Tribunal for a reduction of irrigated area from 24.708 lakh acres to 21 lakh acres. The Tribunal did not accept this contention and mentioned in its final verdict that Tamil Nadu's irrigated area is 24.708 lakh acres. The Supreme court also has accepted this.

• Without prejudice to the Supreme Court's present order, supply of water to Tamil Nadu as per the final judgment of the Cauvery Tribunal for 15 years on a monthly basis has been confirmed.

• After hearing the arguments of all the States fully, the Supreme Court has given a clear judgment that upper riparian states should not take up construction works whatsoever without the consent of the lower riparian states.

Both before and after the Supreme Court judgment, I have been strongly and consistently emphasizing on the Hon'ble Prime Minister, through letters of 25.02.2017, 27.02.2017, 04.09.2018, 08.10.2018 and 22.11.2018 and in person, our standpoint that the Central Government should not permit the construction of the dam at Mekedatu. Also, I urged the Central Minister for Water Resources in person on 05.07.2017 and on 23.11.2017 and through letters, that the Central Government should not give permission to the Karnataka Government in any manner.

The Chairman of the Central Water Resources Commission is holding additional charge as Chairman of the Cauvery Management Authority. The Commission, functioning under his Chairmanship, ignored all the Tamil Nadu's objections and permitted the Karnataka Government to prepare a detailed project report for construction of a new dam at Mekedatu. Even while granting permission for the preparation of a detailed project report, the Chairman's act briefing the media that no permission will be granted without Tamil Nadu Government's consent, is akin to hunting with the hound and running with the hare.

It is regrettable that the Central Government which should be impartial to states, is showing partiality in the Cauvery water issue and acts without regard for Tamil Nadu's stand inspite of reiteration several times.

Already, the Supreme Court has ordered an additional allocation of 14.75 t.m.c. ft. water for Karnataka for its use inclusive of the drinking water needs of Bengaluru city. After calculating Bengaluru city's water needs and getting Cauvery water for it already, Karnataka's efforts to construct the Mekedatu dam with a capacity of 67 t.m.c. ft. water for Bengaluru city's water needs are fraught with an ulterior motive of turning Tamil Nadu into a desert. The Central Water Commission's act of supporting this is condemnable.

The Karnataka Government will not only be increasing its storage capacity by its proposed Mekedatu dam scheme under the cloak of supplying water to Bengaluru city, the irrigated area of that state will also be expanded. Hence, construction of this dam will severely affect the livelihood and rights of the people of Tamil Nadu. Also, in years of water deficiency, a situation will arise where Karnataka will be utilizing, as in past years, Cauvery water fully for its own use.

For example, a severe drought prevailed in Tamil Nadu in the months of January and February this year. Mettur dam had a low storage of water while Karnataka dams had a storage of up to 50 t.m.c. ft. of water. Hence, I wrote a letter to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka on 13.01.2018, explaining the situation in Tamil Nadu and requesting immediate release of 3 t.m.c.ft. of water in the Cauvery on a humanitarian basis for quenching the thirst of Tamil Nadu people. Also, I sought an appointment to meet him. They neither gave the appointment nor the water.

At that point of time, they had to give us 70 t.m.c. ft. of water but we asked them just 3 t.m.c. ft. of water for drinking purposes. The leader of the Congress party asks why it has not been done. At that time, the Congress party ruled in Karnataka. People of Tamil Nadu asked for 3 t.m.c. ft. of water for drinking purposes but that was turned down by your 'national' party, the Congress party. This point has to be put forward in detail. You were interrupting me often. That is what I wish to tell you here.

Apart from this, the Karnataka Water Resources Minister has been inspecting now and then, the site where the Mekedatu dam is proposed to be constructed. This appears to be done with a motive of blowing up the Cauvery water issue and instigating the feelings of Tamil Nadu people.

I once again urged the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'ble Central Minister for Water Resources through letters on 27.11.2018 to advise the Central Water Resources Commission to immediately withdraw its permission to Karnataka for the preparation of a detailed project report on the grounds of Tamil Nadu's objections to the project and because no prior permission of Tamil Nadu had been got as per the Supreme court judgment.

Also, on the advice of legal experts, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court on 30.11.2018 on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government for a stay on the permission granted to Karnataka. The petition is to be heard shortly by the Supreme Court.

At the meeting of the Cauvery Management Authority held on 03.12.2018, Tamil Nadu representatives strongly protested the permission granted to Karnataka by the Central Water Resources Commission and demanded its immediate withdrawal. It was stressed at that meeting that the Central Water Resources Commission should not take any decision without considering the Supreme Court judgment on such matters which affect the livelihood of several lakhs of Tamil Nadu farmers who are dependent on the Cauvery waters. It was also put forth decisively that the Central Government should not grant any permission to the upper riparian state of Karnataka for construction of a new dam in the Cauvery basin.

Also, a contempt of court case was filed in the Supreme court on 05.12.2018 against the Chairman of the Central Water Resources Commission who gave permission for the preparation of a detailed project report for Karnataka Government's Mekedatu scheme in defiance of the Supreme Court's order, and against the Karnataka Minister for Water Resources and high officials of the Karnataka Government.

It is the duty of all of us to foster and safeguard the livelihood of delta farmers and the basic rights of the Tamil Nadu people which have been anchored after a long legal battle, dotted by the Court battle revived by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. in 1986, the setting up of the Cauvery Tribunal, publication of the Tribunal's final verdict in Central Government gazette, invoking the intervention of Supreme Court for the setting up of the Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee as per the final judgment of the Tribunal, getting the final judgment of the Supreme Court and thereafter working pointedly for the setting up of the Cauvery Management Authority.

At a time when we have discharged our duty well, brought the Supreme court's final judgment into operation and exerting pressure on the Central Government then and there and without loss of time for getting Tamil Nadu's share of water in the Cauvery, I have proposed this resolution stressing the withdrawal of the permission given by the Central Water Resources commission to Karnataka and a directive by the Central Government to Karnataka Government not to undertake any construction; work at Mekedatu or at any other place in the Cauvery basin. I request through the Hon'ble Speaker, all Hon'ble members to pass this resolution unanimously.

Hon'ble Chief Minister launches distribution of free dhotis, sarees

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 28.12.2018, inaugurated distribution of dhotis and sarees at no cost for the Pongal Festival to cardholders by formally handing over free sarees and dhotis to members of 5 families.

To provide employment to handloom weavers throughout the year and thereby improve their standard of living, the then Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivar Dr.M.G.R inaugurated distribution of dhotis and sarees at no cost to family cardholders.

As per the scheme, every year during Pongal festival, dhotis and sarees are distributed at no cost. The scheme benefits not only the poor and downtrodden who are given the dhotis and sarees but also the poor weavers who get employment throughout the year.

The Tamil Nadu Government, treading the path of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, for the 2019 Pongal festival, under the distribution of free dhotis and sarees scheme, will distribute 1 crore, 56 lakh and 54,000 sarees and 1 crore, 56 lakh and 44,000 dhotis, totally costing Rs. 484.25 crore.

As a mark of inaugurating the scheme, Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami distributed free dhotis and sarees to 5 families at the Secretariat.

Applauding renowned surgeon for opening hospital in Chennai...

Hon'ble Chief Minister describes State's rise as a medical capital of India

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the opening ceremony of GEM Hospital at Perungudi, Chennai on 03.12.2018 (English Translation)

Hon'ble Vice President of India Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu who inaugurated this function, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu brother Thiru. O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Personnel and Administrative Reforms brother Thiru. D.Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Transport brother Thiru. M.R.Vijayabhaskar, State President of the Bharatiya Janata Party Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan, Chief Executive of GEM hospital Respected Dr. C. Palanivelu, Members of Parliament and Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, Respected Vanathi Srinivasan, former members of Parliament and Legislature, Executives of this hospital, Doctors, Elders, Ladies, Industrialists, friends and Newspaper and Media friends – at the outset I offer my grateful respects to all of you.

The Management of GEM Hospital, Coimbatore has come forward to set up its

hospital at Chennai for the welfare of the people in the city and its suburbs. I am extremely happy to participate in the inaugural of this hospital.

Dr. Palanivelu was the first person to have started a laparoscopic surgery centre for stomach and intestinal disorders as also for hernia in the whole of India, in Coimbatore, in the name of GEM hospital. Laparoscopic surgery averts the necessity of long-time recuperation in hospital and at home and helps patients resume normal work very quickly. Likewise, he was the first person to introduce the procedure of laparoscopic surgery in South India in 2001. We understand that this was the first hospital in India to have applied laparoscopic surgery procedure for all speciality treatments including kidney ailments and that it employs modern 3D, 4K and robotic methods of laparoscopic surgery. Also, this hospital has been recognized as a centre for medical research. The accomplishment of GEM hospital in removing a liver for donation through the laparoscopy procedure, a first in South India, is praiseworthy.

Dr. Palanivelu has the honour of being the first Indian of not only demonstrating laparoscopic treatment in foreign countries including England, U.S.A., Korea and China but also of teaching the procedure there. He completed his research studies in Cambridge University in England. In 2005, he was honoured with the highest medical award of India – Dr.B.C. Roy Award - for excellent performance in laparoscopic surgical treatment. Once again, he was honoured with the Dr.B.C.Roy award in 2015 under the category 'Eminent Medical Person.' An additional tribute is that he is one among the four doctors who received this award under this category.

"My aim is to make available to all people in the State, whatever their socio-economic background, all procedures and technology related to medical treatment and to give them the best medical attention," said Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon'ble Amma's Government that follows the footsteps of Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, also always gives priority to the health of the people of Tamil Nadu. A healthy State alone is a prosperous State. Hon'ble Amma's Government that follows in the footsteps of Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, always gives priority to Tamil Nadu people's physical well-being.

The substratum for a country's development and growth is its best human resources. I am very happy to inform here that Tamil Nadu is a pioneering State in the reduction of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternity Mortality Rate (MMR) as also in other health indices. The mortality rate reduction is being achieved only due to the excellent implementation of maternity and child welfare schemes.

To ensure a uniform health safety net, Hon'ble Amma and Hon'ble Amma's Government have implemented pioneering programmes. I wish to mention a few of them here.

• The Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation, Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society and Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu are rendering the best medical service. Tamil Nadu has to its credit, implementation of many pioneering schemes like Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme, Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme, Adolescent Girls Hygiene Programme, Birth Companion Programme, Amma Baby Care Kit, Amma Arogya Thittam, Amma Whole Body Check-up, Amma Maternity Sanjeevi Scheme and Amma Pharmacy.

• Tamil Nadu has been receiving the Central Government's Award for 4 years in succession for best performance in cadaver organ transplant surgery in the country.

• Tamil Nadu has set up excellent records in health indices like infant and maternity mortality rates and total fertility rate due to the best work put in by the Department of public health of the Tamil Nadu Government. Tamil Nadu is one of the three states in India that have achieved in 2016 itself the targets to be achieved by 2030 in maternity mortality rates under the standard growth targets.

• In the last 7 years, 254 new Primary Health Centres have been set up at a cost of Rs.221.30 crore.

• In addition, 165 Primary Health Centres have been upgraded at a cost of Rs.190.37 crore with a 30-bed strength facility and other facilities like Scan.

• For best maintenance of cleanliness in Government hospitals, Cuddalore District Government Headquarters Hospital, Government Headquarters Hospital, Manapparai, Aruppukottai Government Hospital and Upgraded Primary Health Centre, Mugaiyur have been presented the Central Government's 'Kayakalp Award' – a shield, a citation and a cheque for Rs.1 crore.

• Amma's Government has so far given Rs.1,035 crore for infrastructure in Government medical colleges and institutions, Rs.376 crore for appliances, Rs.174.68 crore for infrastructure in District Government hospitals and District auxiliary hospitals and Rs.82.41 crore for appliances.

• The National Health Mission has given Rs.630.40 crore for infrastructure in Government medical institutions and Rs.722.26 crore for medical colleges.

• Under the Tamil Nadu Urban Health Scheme, implemented with financial assistance from Japan International Co-operation Agency, 11 Government hospitals and District-level hospitals are to be upgraded at a cost of Rs.1,634 crore with infrastructure and high tech medical equipment.

• Installation of modern equipment like M.R.I. Scan and C.T. Scan continues in Government hospitals.

• Due to the ceaseless efforts put in by Hon'ble Amma and following her Hon'ble Amma's Government, AIIMS Hospital is to be

set up at a cost of Rs.1,500 crore at Thoppur in Madurai District.

• Steps are being taken to start a new Government Medical College at Karur and a new Dental College at Virudhunagar.

• An International Yoga and Naturopathy Science Centre of global standards is to be set up on 50 acres of land in the Government medical college complex at Chengalpet at a cost of Rs.60 crore.

• The annual insurance cover for a family under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme has been enhanced from Rs.2 lakh to Rs.5 lakh.

• Tamil Nadu shines as the Medical Capital of India as it has become a model State for the country, not only in offering high class medical services but also in creating the best human resources and structural facilities.

The operation theatres and intensive care units in GEM hospital are equipped with all modern facilities. Cancer in the pancreas is generally considered as complicated for surgery. But respected Doctor Thiru. Palanivelu, by his sheer efficiency, has successfully performed this complicated surgery through the laparoscopic method. He is the first to do so in the whole world. He has won silver in the International Olympics for surgery. He has received more than 25 awards at the global level. His greatness is revealed from the fact that his line of treatment for cancer in the food pipe is acknowledged at the international level and is named as 'Palanivelu's Technique of esophagectomy'. I understand that he has saved many lives. That is why people regard doctors who save their lives on par with God.

"My lot consists of doing my duty" (*En Kadan Pani seidhu kidappathe*) is a saying of our elders. Doctors should work in this manner. Lord Krishna said in the Bhagavad Gita: "Do your duty; don't think about the results". Our elders affirm that there is always a deserving reward for work done. So, those who do their duty without expectations will surely be rewarded. I wish to share an incident with you in this regard.

In a village in England, there was a poor farmer named Fleming. One day, while going to his field to work, he saw a boy struggling to get out a pit of quicksand. The boy was calling out for help. After a great struggle, Fleming saved the boy from the quicksand.

The boy's father, a very rich man, came to his house the next day. He asked the farmer what he wanted. The farmer replied: "I did my duty. I don't want any reward". The rich man looked around, saw Fleming's son and took him away, saying, " I will arrange for this boy's good education". With that rich man's help, the farmer's son studied, got degrees and accomplished great things in the medical field. Yes, that boy was none other than Alexander Fleming, the inventor of Penicillin, an antibiotic used to cure so many bodily ailments – from minor injury to heart disease. The boy thus served the whole of humanity.

Many years later, the rich man's son, saved by his father (Fleming), suffered an attack of pneumonia and it was penicillin which saved him. Do you know who that boy was? He was Winston Churchill, the famous British Prime Minister who played a great role in the downfall of Hitler in the Second World War.

A poor farmer's act of saving a boy struggling for life, without expecting anything in return, resulted in his son rising to become a world-renowned doctor through the help of a rich man. Also, the world benefited out of the penicillin drug he discovered and developed. Likewise, the act of educating well a poor

farmer's son led to the saving of the life of that rich man's son who became the Prime Minister of that Country.

Saint Valluvar stated: *"Uttraan alavum, piniyalavum, kaalamum kattraan karudhi cheyal"*. That is , appropriate treatment should be given after examining and understanding the age of the patient, the intensity of illness and the duration of the affliction.

I urge that the work of your hospital, started today at Perungudi, Chennai should be in accordance with Valluvar's statement. Providing quality medical service to all without any distinction of poor and rich should be the hallmark of your functioning. I take leave of you, offering my good wishes for this hospital to grow into a world renowned hospital in future through such service.

Nandri! Vanakkam!

'Take pledge to free Tamil Nadu of HIV/AIDS virus'

Message of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** on World AIDS Day - 31.11.2018 (English Translation)

For creating awareness among people about AIDS, 'World AIDS Day' is observed every year on the first day of the month of December. This year's World AIDS Day theme is 'Know your status' in respect of HIV testing and treatment and prevention of HIV.

On behalf of Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society, 2,561 Integrated Counselling and Intensive Treatment Centres (ICITC), 15 mobile ICITCs and 2 mobile HIV/AIDS awareness campaign vans are in service for extending HIV testing and treatment. Besides, there are 55 Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART) centres and 194 link ART centres for treating HIV patients. To prevent the passing on of HIV virus to the child in the womb from HIV-affected parents, special treatment is given to pregnant women at the ICITCs and ART centres functioning in Government hospitals in all Districts.

The Tamil Nadu Government, functioning on the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing several welfare schemes for the benefit of HIV/AIDS affected persons. These include bus pass at no cost for commuting to hospital for treatment, a monthly pension of Rs.1,000 under the Chief Minister's Uzhavar Pathukappu Thittam, priority in allotting houses under the scheme for distribution of Green Houses with solar panel, grant of monthly pension to HIV-affected young widows by relaxing the age criterion, setting up of a Government Trust with a corpus of Rs.10 crore for HIV-affected children and providing them nutritious food and scholarship from the interest of that fund.

I affectionately urge everyone to create AIDS awareness among people, take a pledge to free Tamil Nadu of HIV/AIDS virus, help the affected persons with humanism and instill self-confidence in them.

'Tamil Nadu occupies premier place in health care, looks to advance further'

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the inaugural function of the 78th National Conference of the Association of Surgeons of India, held in Chennai on 27.12.2018 (English Translation).

My greetings to all. I am extremely happy to participate in the inaugural of the ASICON 2018 – Chennai, the 78th National Conference, conducted by the Association of Surgeons of India.

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Minister for Food Thiru. Kamaraj, Dr. Rathnasamy who has delivered the welcome address, Secretary Dr. Ebenesh Bensam, Dr.Dhilip S.Gode, Vice President Dr. Arvind Kumar, Dr. Siva K.Misra, Dr. K.Vinayak Senthil who is to propose a vote of thanks, surgeons from abroad participating in the conference, Executives of the Association of Surgeons of India, newspaper and media friends – at the outset, I offer my respects to all of you.

I welcome all the surgeons who have come from all over India, SAARC Countries and other countries for this prestigious conference. I hope you all have a pleasant stay at Chennai and excellent discussions in this conference.

Tamil Nadu occupies the premier place in the field of health care in India. It will be no exaggeration to say that your interactions in this conference will form the basis for innovations in the medical field and for providing uniform, quality medical service throughout the Country. I am very happy to learn that this organization has branches in 22 states across the Country

and units in many cities. It is an honour for Tamil Nadu that this national conference is being held in Chennai after 25 years.

The Association of Surgeons of India was started in the year 1938 with its headquarters at Chennai. The Association has ensured that the latest modern surgical technologies are taken to everyone in our Country. I am happy to note that more than 18,000 surgeons in the association are serving our people in a selfless and committed manner to relieve them of pain and suffering. I hope you will share the latest developments and your valuable experiences in the conference, so that the surgeons become more skilled and effective.

Chennai is fast developing as a medical tourism hub and this conference would add pace to this objective. Hon'ble Amma's Government always provides excellent medical services to the people of Tamil Nadu and has established health and medical care facilities all over the State. My Government has taken various policy decisions towards the same so that Tamil Nadu becomes a numero uno State for providing health care facilities not only for our countrymen but also for everyone all over the world.

Though surgery, considered as the high-end technology in medical field has become a common procedure all over the world today, its present growth has been made possible by man's constant struggle, spread over many centuries.

I am proud to mention here that it was Sushruta, hailed as the Father of Surgery, who explained with guidelines and first demonstrated to the world how the affected parts of the body that could not be cured through medicines, could be rectified through surgery without causing loss of life and how incisions should be made and sutured towards that end. He was the person who gave to humanity, the world's first encyclopedia on surgical treatment, the 'Sushruta Samhita'. He was a genius in surgery. He is hailed as the Father of the Science of Anesthesia and Plastic Surgery. I am proud to proclaim that our Country was the model for the entire world in the sphere of health care. It was Sushruta, who also demonstrated that a child could be removed from the womb through surgery when it cannot be delivered normally. We have to be proud of this fact and spread it globally.

In present times, medicare and surgery have evolved much globally and damages caused to various organs are easily set right through surgery like heart surgery and surgery of bone joints, without causing any harm to patients. Doctors like you in India have also

been recording many achievements in surgical procedures. I wish to mention an event in this regard.

Excessive practice rendered Abhishek Prasad, a guitarist's left hand middle, ring and little fingers inactive. A neurologist who examined him diagnosed the disease as dystonia and said it could be set right through surgery. This condition brought about muscle spasm, twisting of fingers and repetitive movements. The surgery was to burn a circuit in the brain. At each application, doctors asked Abhishek Prasad to play the guitar. At the sixth application, the fingers opened up. On the operation table itself, he said, he had come to normalcy. That guitar artist stated that he could play the instrument very well after the surgery. During the surgery, he was conscious and was observing the surgery. In India, this type of surgery is a milestone. We are all proud to learn that an Indian surgeon has accomplished this.

In a Government Hospital in Tamil Nadu, a transplantation surgery was successfully conducted on a person who had lost both his hands. Likewise, I am proud to point out that 16 heart transplantation surgeries have been successfully performed in 3 Government Hospitals in the state. To crown all these, organ transplantation surgeries are being successfully performed nowadays in more numbers. Tamil Nadu has got awards 4 times in succession for being the premier state in organ donation.

Till now, the medical field has given a lease of life through organ transplantation surgery, to persons with damaged hearts, kidneys and lungs. But no remedy was found for those with no wombs or with damaged wombs. Now, a solution has been found even for that. A medical team of a hospital in Pune performed a womb transplant surgery on a woman last year and a girl child has been born to that woman. This is a historic achievement.

Hon'ble Amma and Hon'ble Amma's Government have been implementing several pioneering schemes with a view to ensuring uniform health care. I wish to mention a few of them here.

- The Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation, the Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society and Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu have been providing the best medical service. Tamil Nadu has the honour of being the first state to have implemented many pioneering schemes like Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Assistance Scheme, Chief Minister Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme, Hygiene scheme for adolescent girls, Birth Companion scheme, Amma Baby Care Kit, Amma Health Scheme, Amma Body Scan, Amma Maternity Sanjeevi Scheme and Amma Pharmacy.
- An AIIMS Hospital is to be set up at a cost of Rs.1,500 crore at Thoppur in Madurai District due to the consistent efforts of Hon'ble Amma and Hon'ble Amma's Government.
- Steps are being taken to start a new Government Medical College at Karur and a new Dental College at Virudhunagar.
- The insurance cover under the Chief Minister Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme has been increased from Rs.2 lakh to Rs.5 lakh per family per year. Under this scheme, different kinds of treatments have been given to 27.68 lakh patients so far at a cost of Rs.5,420 crore.
- Tamil Nadu is shining as the Medical Capital of India as it has become a model state for the entire Country not only in giving high class health service but also in creating the best human resources and providing structural facilities.

Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma stated: "It is my aim to make available all applications connected with medical

treatment, technology and medical excellence to all people in the state without considering their socio-economic background".

Likewise, I understand, your Association's motto is: "We are for Service". I request you on this occasion, to be supportive of Government's actions to take to the farthest corners the technological advancements made in the medical field, by attending on patients, as Hon'ble Amma has stated, without minding economic disparities.

I convey my greetings to surgeons from all countries, including India, who have come to participate in this conference.

I thank the organizers of the conference for inviting me and hope this conference benefits all those who are participating. I also sincerely wish that the outcome of this conference should benefit humanity as a whole.

Thank You.

I pray that love, peace and brotherhood should prevail in this world

Greetings of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** on the occasion of Christmas - 24.12.2018 (English Translation)

I extend my warm Christmas greetings to members of the Christian community, who happily celebrate Christmas as the birth anniversary of Jesus Christ, who is another form of mercy.

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Jesus, who lived with the principle that Love is life, if one follows his golden preaching such as 'love your enemies', 'love those who criticize you' and 'do good to your enemies' and 'pray to God for those who bring suffering to you', there will be peace and happiness in the world.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma introduced many welfare schemes for the Christian community in the State. For the first time in the Country special financial assistance to Christians belonging to Tamil Nadu, for undertaking pilgrimage to Jerusalem was introduced by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. The State Government gives subsidy for repairing and renovating Churches in the State and implements many similar welfare schemes for them. The Tamil Nadu Government, which follows the path of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, who had special interest in Christians, continues to implement Amma's schemes and has so far extended assistance to 3,236 Christians for undertaking pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

On the happy occasion of the birth anniversary of Jesus Christ, I pray that love, peace and brotherhood should prevail in this world. I once again extend my whole hearted Christmas greetings to the Christian community.

'Tamil Nadu takes manifold steps for the Differently abled'

Greetings of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** on International Day of Persons with Disabilities (English Translation)

By way of protecting the rights and interests of persons with disabilities, the 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' is observed every year on December 3. On this day, I extend my good wishes to all the differently-abled persons.

To uplift the differently-abled persons in society, enjoying all rights on par with others, the Tamil Nadu Government that treads on the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has made a 4 per cent reservation for them in jobs in Government, public sector units, Boards, local bodies and in educational institutions. It distributes retro-fitted petrol scooters at no cost to those with impaired legs; provides travel concessions in buses to persons with disabilities; extends the benefit under the Chief Minister Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme to all members of the family without considering income ceiling, if one of them is a disabled person; distributes luminescent folding sticks to visually impaired persons, special wheel chairs for those affected with cerebral palsy; has reduced the eligibility criterion for the mentally retarded for receiving monthly pension to 45 per cent and increased the monthly assistance to Rs.1,500 to the severely affected/mentally retarded and to those affected by muscular dystrophy.

The Government is also implementing many welfare programmes for the differently-abled like sanctioning full day wages to disabled persons if they put in 4 hours of work in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, a first of its kind in India, 3 per cent reservation in the allotment of houses under the Green House Distribution Scheme, reduction of the minimum age under the pension scheme to 18 years of age, setting up of an early intervention centre at Chennai (State Resource Centre), the first of its kind in India, for diagnosis and treatment of children with disabilities by specialists and experts, for distribution of necessary appliances, certificates and financial assistance and for counselling on their future way of life and installing audio signals at 150 road junctions in Chennai for the visually impaired to cross the road safely.

On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, I request all the differently -abled persons to make use of Tamil Nadu Government's exalting schemes designed after understanding their needs and implemented for a life of total satisfaction to them and rise up in life.

Mobile campaign van flagged off as forerunner to ban on one-time use-and-throw plastic

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 10.12.2018, flagged off a mobile awareness campaign van against use of one-time use-and-throw plastic products and for the use of alternatives as the Tamil Nadu Government has banned the use of one-time use-and-throw plastic products from January 1, 2019 for a 'Plastic Pollution Free Tamil Nadu'.

"Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma constituted an expert committee to study the impact of plastic usage on health and the environment. Based on the recommendations of the expert committee, with all your support and participation, the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Government is to implement the scheme to present the future generation a 'plastic pollution-free Tamil Nadu'.

For the common public and traders to get accustomed to cloth bags and paper bags, the Tamil Nadu Government decided to implement the ban from January 1, 2019."+ This was announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami in the Assembly while making a statement under Rule 110 on 05.06.2019, coinciding with World Environment Day.

As per the Government Order issued in this connection on 25.06.2018, manufacture, storage, distribution, transportation and sale of one-time use-and-throw plastic items such as plastic sheets, plastic plates, tea cups/tumblers coated with plastic, plastic straws, plastic flags, plastic drinking water sachets, and plastic handbags (irrespective of the thickness), will be prohibited from 01.01.2019.

Plastic sheets and covers, used for wrapping food items, plastic sheets used to spread on dining tables, thermocol plates, paper plates and paper mugs, coated with plastic, plastic tea cups, plastic mugs, thermocol mugs, plastic bags (irrespective of thickness and size), bags coated with plastic, plastic carry-bags, plastic water sachets, plastic straws and plastic flags are all to be prohibited from usage.

To implement the ban successfully from 01.01.2019 for a 'Plastic pollution-free Tamil Nadu', a 10-member steering committee has been formed. Three regional co-ordinators have also been nominated. Seven regional co-ordinators, consisting of officials of Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board are to work with the regional co-ordinators.

At a function held at the Secretariat on 23.08.2018, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, as a mark of inaugurating a campaign for creating a 'Plastic pollution free Tamil Nadu' introduced a logo, a portal www.plasticpolllutionfreetn.org and an App.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also released short films on how to avoid use of plastic, how to reuse of plastic, introduced a brand ambassador nominated by the Tamil Nadu Government for creating awareness among the people and distributed cheques to entrepreneurs who have started units to manufacture products as an alternatives to plastic products.

As a follow up measure, to create awareness against plastic, a mobile awareness van was flagged off by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami. The mobile van besides creating awareness about plastic will also be helpful in successfully implementing the Tamil Nadu Government's 'Plastic Pollution free Tamil Nadu'.

Hon'ble Chief Minister busts Opposition's canard, arrays details of manifold schemes

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** at the Mupperum Vizha of laying foundation for new works, inaugurating completed schemes and distribution of welfare assistance, held at Veeraganur, Salem District on 14.12.2018. (English Translation)

Bowing to Goddess Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

I offer my grateful thanks to all the good hearts who have assembled for this Government function, from Veeraganur and from different parts of Gangavalli Union and accorded me a welcome with genial faces on both flanks of the road. I extend my humble respects to all the people who have graced this function. This Mupperum Vizha – laying foundation for new works, opening/inaugurating completed schemes and distribution of Government welfare assistance – is being held in this Veeraganur Town Panchayat area.

The opposition parties are raising questions such as, 'What is happening in this regime? What schemes are they implementing? And in what way people will benefit ?' They are spreading falsehood among people.

This event will show what achievements Amma's Government has recorded. Welfare assistance has been given to about 27,092 beneficiaries in Athur area alone through 21 Departments at this function – Departments of Rural Development, Health

& Family Welfare, School Education, Co-operation, Town Panchayats, Fisheries, Revenue, Social Welfare, Animal Husbandry, Women's Programme in Rural Development, Forest, Agriculture, Horticulture, Agricultural Engineering, Sericulture, THADCO, Differently-abled Welfare, Dairy, Backward Classes and Minorities welfare, Adi Dravidar welfare and Scheduled Tribes Welfare. I am proud to say that this welfare assistance distribution function itself is a proof for how a Government should function. So, the Government is functioning excellently in all sectors. Also, the funds flowing to the people through this triple event is Rs.131,51,00,608. So, the Government is functioning excellently. I wish to point out that the required benefits are reaching the people through these Departments.

Moreover, Amma's Government, through this function, proposes to lay a road from Koothamuthal to Kovilur, in Yercaud, at a cost of Rs.4.10 lakh under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme on behalf of the Rural Development Department, execute many health care and welfare schemes (Health & Family Welfare Department), construct a new building (Rs.20 lakh) for the Thittacheri Primary Agriculture Co-operative Society in Gangavalli Assembly constituency (Co-operation), modernize the bus-stand in Belur Town Panchayat (Rs.3 crore) under the Capital Subsidy Fund Scheme and implement 21 new scheme works inclusive of road, street light, water supply and toilet facilities (Rs.8,30,46,000) in the Town Panchayats of Veeraganur, Belur, Gangavalli, Senthaarapatti, Thammampatti, Thedavur, Keeripatti, Pethanaickenpalayam and Vazhapadi (Town Panchayat Department).

Foundation has been laid today for 31 works valued at Rs.35,41,34,000 inclusive of a new fish seed centre for the protection of pure Rohu fish fingerlings and for breeding fishes at a cost of Rs. 3 crore in the Mettur Municipal area (Fisheries Department).

Under the MLA Fund Development and THAI – II scheme, 9 completed schemes at a cost of Rs.1.30 crore in the Panchayat Unions of Pethanaickenpalayam, Athur, Thalaivasal and Gangavalli (District rural Agency of the Rural Development Department) and 3 dialysis machines at a cost of Rs.25 lakh at Athur Government hospital (Health &Family Welfare Department) - totally 10 completed works

costing Rs.1.55 crore - have been declared open/inaugurated today.

As for welfare assistance, 2,000 persons have benefited to the tune of Rs.28.90 crore - housing subsidy of Rs.1.70 lakh each to 100 beneficiaries under the Prime Minister Awas Yojana Scheme, construction of houses for 400 beneficiaries under the Chief Minister's Green House with solar panels scheme and subsidy for construction of toilets in individual houses for 1,500 beneficiaries; distribution of bicycles at no cost valued at Rs.4,59,38,000 to 12,366 students (School education department); credit facility to an extent of Rs.50,98,77,000 to 7,159 beneficiaries – crop loan to 5,801 persons, medium term loan to 506 persons, loan to differently- abled for 99 persons, Self-Help Group loan for 616 persons, individual loan to 11 persons, mortgage and other credit facility to 126 persons (Co-operation Department); Financial Assistance to the tune of Rs.1,46,82,000 to 286 beneficiaries under the Housing for All scheme (Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department); assistance to the extent of Rs.85.68 lakh to 1,476 persons – Scheduled Tribe certificates to 907 persons, house site pattas to 315 persons, scholarship to 83 persons, funeral assistance in natural deaths under the 'Uzhavar Paadukappu Thittam' to 76 persons, marriage assistance to 20 persons, natural death assistance to 47 persons, old-age pension to 10 persons, accident relief assistance to 8 persons, widow pension to 6 persons and agricultural labour assistance to 4 persons (Revenue Department); marriage assistance to the extent of Rs.3.63 crore with 8 grams gold for 'Thaali' to 571 women under the Moovalur Ramamritham Ammaiyar Marriage Assistance Scheme (Social Welfare Department); 4 goats and sheep each to 500 beneficiaries at a cost of Rs.64.75 lakh at no cost (Animal Husbandry Department); assistance worth Rs.47.75 lakh to 500 women – subsidy under the two-wheeler scheme for working women to 103 women, direct loan facility to one Women's self-help group and Rotational Fund for 396 women Self-help Groups (Women's Programme); accessories to manufacture bamboo handicrafts worth Rs.10 lakh to 100 beneficiaries (Forest Department); different kinds of assistance to 500 farmers like drip irrigation equipment, power sprayer, tarpaulin, rottavetter,

assistance to combined farming, seeds etc. worth Rs.33,53,900 (Agriculture Department); various assistance to 400 beneficiaries like distribution of earthworms, tomato saplings, drip irrigation, setting up of nature farming, box to grow bees, power tiller and mini tractor worth Rs.1,60,53,000 (Horticulture Department); subsidy to 3 farmers to set up a rental centre for agriculture machinery and equipment, costing Rs.28 lakh (Agriculture Engineering Department); subsidy for 4 beneficiaries for mulberry cultivation and rearing of silk worm (Rs.2.10 lakh) (Sericulture Department); financial assistance for one beneficiary for purchase of a Bolero Rental Vehicle worth Rs.9,94,800 (THADCO); ultra modern artificial leg to 101 differently-abled persons (Rs.19.77 lakhs), maintenance assistance to mentally retarded people and G.O. for financial assistance to differently abled persons; (Department for Differently-abled persons welfare); a 5,000 litre capacity milk refrigeration unit worth Rs.30.61 lakh for the Veeraganur Milk Producers' Society, a prize money and incentive of Rs.18,500 to 6 members as best milk producers (Dairy Development); sewing machines and iron boxes (Rs.1.50 lakh) at no cost to 30 persons (Backward Classes Welfare Department); sewing machines (Rs.93,600); to 10 persons at no cost (Adi Dravidar Welfare Department); and individual forest rights pattas and community forest rights pattas to 78 persons (Scheduled Tribes Welfare department) - totally Rs.94,55,26, 800 worth of assistance has been distributed to 27,092 beneficiaries in this function.

What more do the opposition parties expect? I am giving out details with statistics so that people can understand.

The Leader of the Opposition Stalin always asks what is happening in this regime and says nothing is happening; no scheme is implemented under this Government and people are not getting any benefit. As I have stated, if 27,092 persons in this region are benefited, it shows how Amma's Government is functioning - how it assesses and caters to the needs of the people. As for Amma's Government, it is a Government that functions; Amma was active when she was alive; after Amma's demise, Amma's Government is functioning excellently and on the same lines of Amma.

During the DMK's rule, before 2011, what was the state of the Gangavalli assembly constituency? After Amma's rule blossomed, after Amma became Chief Minister, how has this regime functioned? You should ponder over this. You should also consider how this Government is functioning for the last nearly one year and 10 months after the demise of Amma. You should make a comparative study. Then only, you can understand the extent to which people have benefited under our regimes. I wish to mention a few achievements of the Government that functions on the lines of Amma.

Under the upgradation scheme of Panchayat Union Roads into District union roads, a G.O. has been issued for construction of a 3.15 km long flyover on the Malliakarai-Karutharajapalayam road at a cost of Rs.1.37 crore and tenders have been floated;

the Government is taking steps to construct a high rise road bridge across bus stand on the Chinna Samudram Adi Dravidar Colony Road, Pethanaickenpalayam Town Panchayat at a cost of Rs.6.60 crore; a project evaluation report has been prepared for construction of high rise road bridge on the Murugan Koil Road, Gandhi Nagar at a cost of Rs.5.25 crore and it has been forwarded to NABARD Bank for clearance; work on the project will commence once permission is granted; bids have been received and are under examination for construction of a check dam across Kallaru in Panaimadai village, Pethanaickenpalayam Taluk at a cost of Rs.1.37 crore; work will commence shortly; G.O. has been issued for construction of 8 class rooms for Yethapur Government Higher Secondary School, Pethanaickenpalayam Taluk in a building with ground and first floors, a science laboratory, toilets and other works inclusive of drinking water facility, all at a cost of Rs.1.66 crore under the NABARD scheme and tenders have been floated; work will commence shortly; work is to commence shortly on a new auditorium in the Arignar Anna Government Arts College complex, North Chennimalai Village, Aathur Taluk at a cost of Rs.6.90 crore; a tender has been floated for construction of a high rise bridge across the river on the Narikuravar Colony Road, Ammapalayam, Athur at a cost of Rs.5 crore as a 2018-2019 scheme under the Central Road fund scheme; tender has been floated for construction of a high rise road bridge near Thumbal, Ayodhipattinam at a cost of Rs.3.50 crore as a 2018-2019 scheme under the Central Road Fund Scheme; I am happy to inform that a 54.80 km stretch of national highway from Perambalur to Aathur on the Thanjavur-Perambalur-Aathurnationalhighway

will be widened from a 7 metre wide road to a 10 metre wide road and made traffic congestion-free under the annual scheme for the assembly constituencies of Athur and Gangavalli; construction work on high rise bridge across Swetha river near Mariammankoil on the South Manakkadu Road, Thedavur, Thedavur Town Panchayat, Gangavalli Assembly Constituency is to be taken up shortly; upgradation of Gandhinagar-Thammampatti road (2.20 km) will be undertaken at a cost of Rs.99 lakh under the upgradation of Panchayat Union roads into District other road; preliminary survey works have been undertaken for construction of a flyover on the 3 km road that branches off from Thammampatti-Thedavur road to go to Naduvalur; a detailed project report is being prepared for construction of a flyover on the Thalaivasal-Mummudi road at a cost of Rs.5 crore and another flyover from Thittacheri to Muthuvadi road; after getting tender bids, works will commence for construction of a check dam on the river at Nathuvadi Village, Gangavalli Taluk at a cost of Rs.2.43 crore; tender bids are under examination for construction of a check dam across Souparnika river in front of Kaliammankoil, Gudalur village, Gangavalli Taluk and works will commence shortly; an evaluation report has been prepared for setting up a new lake for Ponnali Ammankoil, Chokkanur Agraharam, Veeraganur Town Panchayat, Gangavalli Taluk and I am happy to state that works will commence after floating tenders; after the completion of this work, wells in nearby lands of the lake will be re-charged and water will be available for irrigation and drinking water purposes.

We are constructing more bridges in Gangavalli constituency in Salem District. When works on the bridges, check dams etc. that I have announced, are completed, I wish to state that Gangavalli Assembly Constituency will be a model to other Constituencies.

We are fulfilling all your demands. However, for the opposition party, nothing is visible. Has Tamil Nadu benefited in any way when they were in Government both at the Centre and in the State? Nothing. Only a family ruled. First, they were in the Bharatiya Janata Party Government. Murasoli Maran was a Minister there. When that party lost popularity, they jumped to the Congress party. They got Ministerial berths. At that time also, they did not do anything for Tamil Nadu. They could have solved the Cauvery, Mullai Periyar and Palar issues. They did not solve any of them. Did they construct check dams? That too, they did not do. But they are mounting a false campaign that we have not done anything though we rule in an excellent way.

Amma's Government is designing schemes for farmers. As a water management scheme for farmers, it brought about the 'kudimaramathu' scheme under which lakes and tanks are dredged and the sediments taken out are applied in farmers' fields as natural manure. Last year, Rs.100 crore was allotted and 1,519 lakes were de-silted as a first phase; the success of this scheme has propelled the taking up of these works in 1,511 more lakes and tanks this year.

Also, to prevent rain water going waste during monsoon periods, Amma's Government has launched a 3-year scheme for construction

of check dams, has allotted Rs.1,000 crore for this and scheme works have been started. This will raise the ground water table and farmers will get their requirements of water.

We are encouraging farmers by supplying them agricultural machinery at subsidized rates. Tamil Nadu continues to be at the premier place at the national level in food grain production and has bagged 'Krishi Karman' award for it. Today, Tamil Nadu is a self-sufficient State.

'India Today' magazine has given Tamil Nadu Government an award for best overall performance. For the best maintenance of law and order also, the magazine gave an award to Tamil Nadu.

During Amma's rule, the best of schemes were implemented in Tamil Nadu. After Amma's demise, those schemes continue to be implemented.

We have brought about a revolution, a renaissance in education. To improve educational standards, priority is given to education and maximum funds are allotted to that Department. Primary Schools are upgraded as middle-level schools, middle-level schools as high schools and high schools as higher secondary schools. As a result of this, the number of students taking to Higher Education has increased – from 21 per cent in 2011 in DMK rule to 46 per cent – and remains the Premier State in India. Enrolment of students in schools has increased. Such are our achievements.

For the benefit of poor farmers, we have implemented a scheme of distribution of milch animals. No other State has done this in India. For the effective implementation of this scheme, a research station of global standards will be set up near Koottu Road on 800 acres of land at a cost of several crore of rupees. All the false propaganda of the Opposition will be defeated.

It is Amma's Government that has provided uninterrupted protected Cauvery water to all parts of Gangavalli Assembly Constituency through a Combined Water Supply Scheme.

Amma set up 65 colleges; after her demise, we have opened 11 arts colleges, taking the total to 76 arts colleges. As we have provided a number of professional colleges – agriculture, veterinary, polytechnic, IT college etc., enabling poor youth study at low tuition fees in Tamil Nadu.

For children to go to school, footwear, school uniform, text books, note books and to carry them, school bags, have all been given at no cost. Amma gave laptops at no cost to school children so that they could get scientific education. At the global level, it is Amma's Government that has given science education to school children. It is no exaggeration to say that Tamil Nadu is the model state in India in Education. Against the Government which has given such wonderful schemes, the opposition parties are levelling a wrong and false propaganda that nothing is taking place under its rule. But that is not true. It is my bounden duty to say that all the schemes I have mentioned are schemes that are beneficial to the people.

My hearty greetings to members of the public who are standing here, unmindful of the scorching sun. I take leave of you, thanking the District Collector for conducting this function so excellently, Government Officers who worked along with him and newspaper and media friends.

Nandri! Vanakkam! ■

Hon'ble Chief Minister launches slew of water resource schemes across State

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 10.12.2018, laid the foundation stone for a new dam across Pennaru between Thalavanur Village in Villupuram Division, Villupuram District and Enathirimangalam Village in Panruti Division, Cuddalore District, on behalf of the Water Resources Department of Public Works Department through video conferencing. The dam is to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 25.35 crore.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister, on the occasion, also laid foundation stones for new water resource schemes worth Rs. 96.07 crore and declared open completed schemes, costing Rs.36.06 crore on behalf of the Public Works Department.

The Tamil Nadu Government, which treads the path of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has been implementing many irrigation schemes successfully through the Water Resources Department for agricultural development, which leads to economic growth and to meet the drinking water needs of the people, conserve water by storing it in irrigation ponds, and create new water resources.

As a part of this, a dam 376.6 metres long and 3.10 metres high is to be constructed across Pennaru in Thalavanur Village in Villupuram Division, Villupuram District and

Enathirimangalam Village in Panruti Division, Cuddalore District, with the financial assistance of NABARD, at a cost of Rs.25.35 crore. The foundation stone for the dam was laid by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat through video conferencing. When the dam comes into operation, it will improve the water levels in 87 wells and provide irrigation to 2,114 acres of land.

From Ennore to Ernavur Kuppum in Madhavaram Division in Tiruvallur District, to prevent soil erosion (Phase - II) at the estuary of Ennore creek, 9 serial groynes at a cost of Rs.38.39 crore for improving the life style of fishermen;

In Cuddalore District, a Check Dam of 200 metres length and 1.5 metres height at a cost of Rs.15.77 crore at Gooddalur Village in Thittakudi Division and a check dam 160 metres long and 1.25 metres high at a cost of Rs.10.05 crore across Manimutharu at Paravalur Village in Viruthachalam division to rejuvenate 55 wells to facilitate irrigation of 160 acres of land;

In Vellore District, a check dam of 40 metres length and 1.50 metres height across Pambaru at Chinnarampatti Village in Tirupattur Division at a cost of Rs.2.48 crore to facilitate irrigation of 62 acres of land through 21 wells; a dam of 210 metres length and 1.5 metres height across River Kallaru, at a cost of Rs.9.90 crore near Nemili and Asanallikuppam to supply water to Sayanavaram Tank and to rejuvenate 11 tanks to provide irrigation to 2,340 acres of land and a check dam of 60 metres length and 1.5 metres height at a cost of Rs.5 crore across Agaram River in Karungali Village in Anaicut Division ;

In Krishnagiri District, a check dam 137.80 metres length and 1.50 metres height, at a cost of Rs.8.84 crore across Pennaiyaru in Barur Village in Arasampatti, in Pochampalli Division, to provide irrigation to 508 acres through 84 wells;

In Tiruvannamalai District, a check dam of 145 metre long and 1.2 metre height at a cost of Rs.5.64 crore across Cheyyaru, a branch river of Palaru at Thellur Village in Arani division;

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami laid foundation stones for the schemes on behalf of the Water Resources Department totally, costing Rs.121.42 crore.

In Thenkarai Village in Periyakulam Division in Theni District, a strengthened protection wall across the Varaha river, at a cost of Rs.15 crore to prevent damages in Periyakulam Town during floods and mixing of sewage water in the Varaha River ;

In Sivagangai District, for rejuvenation of water in the bore pumps and open wells on both sides of River Vaigai for the drinking water pumping station in Aruppukottai Municipality and Tirubuvanam Town Panchayat and to provide irrigation to 1,329 acres of land a check dam across River Vaigai, at a cost of Rs.10 crore in Tirubuvanam Town Panchayat;

In Madurai District, a branch canal between Nilaiyur extended canal to Thottiyapatti kanmai constructed at a cost of Rs.1.30 crore to provide irrigation to Thottiyapatti, Nedumadurai,

Nedumadurai Pudukulam, Periyakoodakoil, and to ensure irrigation to 510 acres of land below these kanmais;

In Tiruchirapalli District, a training centre for PWD employees, built at a cost of Rs. 3.02 crore on an area of 13,728.28 sq.ft. with ground floor and three floors. The centre has a training hall, fitted with modern light and sound facilities, with a seating capacity of 60 persons, besides computer training centre, offices of the Director and Deputy Directors, 8 rooms for those who come for training, dining hall, kitchen and multi-purpose meeting hall and drinking water facility.

Office building with ground and first floor for the Chief Engineer of the PWD, Tiruchi Division, built at a cost of Rs.6.74 crore on a 20,383 sq.ft.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu,Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami declared open irrigation schemes on behalf of the PWD and office buildings, all constructed at a total cost of Rs.36.06 crore.

Hon'ble Chief Minister thanks Hon'ble Prime Minister for Thoppur AIIMS approval

Text of the D.O. letter dated 18.12.2018 of **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu and on my personal behalf,

I thank you for approving the establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Thoppur in Madurai District at a cost of Rs.1,264 crore.

You may recall that my revered leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was very keen that such a prestigious institution is established and made functional in Tamil Nadu.

The Cabinet decision and financial approval accorded yesterday has taken the project to the next stage and my Government will provide all necessary support to facilitate the early commencement and completion of the project so that the long cherished dream of my revered leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is realised."

Twenty-six forest officials conferred Hon'ble Chief Minister's award

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 10.12.2018, distributed certificates and medals for the Hon'ble Chief Minister's Award to 26 Forest Department officials for their outstanding work in protecting forests, wildlife and in safeguarding people from attacks by wild animals for the year 2010-2011 and 2013-2014.

The Tamil Nadu Government honours every year, Forest Department Officials who excel in protecting forests and wildlife, forest research, forest management, development, increasing green cover outside forest areas, eco-tourism, agro-forestry models, forestry education and training, removal of encroachments in forests and prevention of smuggling of forest produce and forest fires.

These awards are given to Forest Watchers, Forest Guards, Foresters, Forest Range Officers, Assistant Conservators of Forests, Deputy Conservators of Forests and District Conservators of Forests. Along with the awards, Forest Watchers and guards are given Rs.2,000 and Forest Guards Rs.3,000 and Assistant Conservator of Forests Rs.5,000.

To encourage Forest Officials who show exemplary courage in protecting forests and wildlife and in safeguarding people from wild animals, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami distributed the Hon'ble Chief Minister's Awards, consisting of certificates and medals for 2010-2011 to 14 Forest Department Officers and Employees and to 12 Forest Department Officers and Employees for 2013-2014. Totally, 26 Forest Department Officials were honoured on the occasion. ■

Fifth standard, but first to lend a helping hand

Akshaya Sri, a fifth standard student of Salem donated Rs.520 to the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund in the cause of 'Gaja' cyclone victims. The money was given to the child, Akshaya Sri, daughter of Thiru. Saravanan of J.J.Nagar, Kichipalayam, Salem, by her grandmother, in driblets for purchase of a bicycle to commute to school.

Appreciating child Akshaya Sri for her donation and extending his good wishes to her for her intention of helping the affected people even at this tender age, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami presented a new bicycle to her by way of lauding her humanism and altruistic bent of mind. ■

Hon'ble Chief Minister inaugurates two Integrated Service Centres for women in distress

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 10.12.2018, declared open Integrated Service Centres at Tambaram Service Centre in Kancheepuram District and in Chengalpattu Government Hospital complex, built at a total cost of Rs. 51.51 lakh, on behalf of the Social Welfare and Nutritious Meals Programme Department, to help affected women.

In addition, the Hon'ble Chief Minister also inaugurated a 24-hour 181 toll free telephone service to help women in distress, a Marriage Assistance Scheme for 2018-2019 and distribution of financial assistance for persons of the third gender to start industries.

Integrated Service Centre is a scheme to support women affected by violence in private and public places, within the family, community, and at the workplace. Women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuses, irrespective of their age, class, caste, education status, marital status, race and culture, will be supported by the centre.

Two Integrated Service Centres, one at the Tambaram Service Home in Kancheepuram District, at a cost of Rs.41.51 lakh and the other at Chengalpattu Government Hospital complex, built at a cost of Rs. 10 lakh were declared open by the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

A toll free 24-hour 181 telephone assistance was also inaugurated with a view to help women affected by violence in the family or by sexual abuse,

either in public or private places. Through this toll-free telephone facility, women in distress can get assistance of Police, hospital, ambulance and free legal aid. Women can also get information about various welfare schemes being implemented by the Government, help provided by the Government for women affected by violence in the family and in other places. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami inaugurated the 24 by 7 toll free women help line on the occasion.

Under the marriage assistance scheme for poor women, the Government gives 8 grams of gold for making Thirumangalyam and Rs.25,000 for non-graduates and Rs.50,000 for graduates and diploma holders. In the budget for 2018-2019, Rs.724 crore has been allotted, which will benefit about 1,11,000 poor women. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami inaugurated the scheme for the current year by handing over assistance of 8 gm gold coins with cheques for Rs. 50,000 to 7 women beneficiaries.

The Government has constituted a Welfare Board for the Third Gender to enable them to face challenges, improve livelihood opportunities and give an identity in society. To redress their grievances and provide livelihood opportunities, the Government has allotted Rs.1 crore for providing assistance to start business of their own and for education. The Tamil Nadu Government, which is following in the path of the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has increased the subsidy amount for Third Gender entrepreneurs from Rs.20,000 to Rs. 50,000 from the current year. Under this, 150 persons of the Third Gender will benefit. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over the subsidy cheque of Rs.50,000 each to five Third Gender entrepreneurs.

Hon'ble Chief Minister hands over Rs.75 lakh for Chennai film fest

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 11.12.2018, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government, handed over a cheque for Rs.75 lakh to the Indo Cine Appreciation Foundation General Secretary, Thiru.E.Thangaraj for the 16th Chennai International Film festival, to be held in Chennai from 13.12.2018 to 20.12.2018.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had extended many facilities to add lustre to the film world during her tenure. For the first time in India, Hon'ble Amma, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Government, gave a subsidy of Rs. 10 crore to the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce for conducting the Centenary Celebrations of Indian Cinema at Chennai, in 2013.

In a similar manner, the Tamil Nadu Government, has so far sanctioned Rs.3.25 crore as subsidy for organizing International Film Festivals in the State.

For the 9th Chennai International Festival in 2011, the Government sanctioned Rs.25 lakh and between 2012 to 2017 for various film festivals the Tamil Nadu Government increased the subsidy amount from Rs.25 lakh to Rs.50 lakh every year.

Now the subsidy amount has been increased from Rs.50 lakh to Rs.75 lakh. Consequent to the issuance of an order to this effect, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami handed over the cheque for Rs. 75 lakh to General Secretary of the Indo Cine Appreciation Foundation, Thiru. E.Thangaraj.

Hon'ble Chief Minister inaugurates 4 godowns, office buildings for 2 co-operative banks

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 10.12.2018 declared open 4 godowns, constructed at a cost of Rs. 6.05 crore on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation, office buildings for Belukurichi branch of the Salem District Central Co-operative Bank and for the Sirkazhi branch of the Kumbakonam Central Co-operative Bank, both built at a cost of Rs.1.60 crore, and 2 fertilizer godowns on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Union.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, while making a statement under Rule 110 statement in the Assembly on 01.08.2018, said the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation would increase its capacity by 84,500 metric tonnes by constructing 39 new godowns in the State, as construction of more godowns plays a vital role in the storage and sales of foodgrains and food security.

As a part of this, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation, two godowns, with a capacity of 1,500 metric tonnes and 1,000 metric tonnes at Manaiyeripatti in Budalur Division in Thanjavur District, constructed at a cost of Rs. 3.40 crore and two more godowns at Valayampattu village in Vaniyambadi Division in Vellore District with a capacity of 1,000 metric tonnes each, constructed at a cost of Rs. 2.65 crore;

New office buildings for the Belukurichi branch of the Salem District Central Co-operative Bank, and for the Sirkazhi branch of the Kumbakonam Central Co-operative Bank, both constructed at a cost of Rs. 80 lakh.

Two fertilizer godowns, one each at Vengikkal in Tiruvannamalai District and Srivilliputhur in Virudhunagar District, each having a capacity of 1,000 metric tonnes, built at a cost of Rs. 1.30 crore by the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Federation.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami declared open these 4 godowns, 2 bank branch buildings, and 2 fertilizer godowns, constructed at a total cost of Rs. 8.95 crore.

Hon'ble Chief Minister pays heartfelt homage to EB staff who gave their lives to restore normalcy

Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** on 24.11.2018 (English Translation)

Twelve Districts including delta Districts were severely affected when `Gaja' cyclone crossed the coast at 110 km speed near Nagapattinam District in the early hours of 16.11.2018. The various precautionary measures taken by this Government that functions on the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, averted large scale loss of life. Still, the cyclone caused damage in a big way to cattle, houses, crops and electric posts.

The severe impact of the cyclone left 1,13,566 electric posts, 1,082 transformers and 194 sub-stations in a damaged condition. I wholeheartedly applaud the work of the 24,941 Electricity Board workers who are putting in their best efforts day and night with no consideration to their lives, in the restoration work of the damaged transformers and electric posts. Their work is praiseworthy.

I was extremely distressed to learn that wireman Thiru.Shanmugam of Kohur village, Kilvelur, Nagapattinam District was electrocuted and died on 16.11.2018 while repairing the electric posts and Thiru. Murugesan of Namakkal District was severely injured on 20.11.2018 while engaged in the work of rectification of electric posts at Kalamavur Village, Kulathur taluk, Pudukkottai District and died at the hospital on 23.11.2018 without responding to treatment.

I convey my deep sense of condolence and sympathy to the bereaved families of Thiru. Shanmugam and Thiru Murugesan who died of electrocution while restoring electric posts damaged by the `Gaja' cyclone.

Considering the family condition of Thiru. Shanmugam and Thiru. Murugesan, I have ordered, as a special case, to hand over to the bereaved families Rs.15 lakh each – Rs. 13 lakh from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund and Rs. 2 lakh from the funds of Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited.

I have also ordered the provision of a job on the basis of merit in a Government organization, to a person from each of these families.

Scholarships distributed to Tamil PG students, compensation amount for Nationalized works

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 11.12.2018, inaugurated the distribution of scholarship of Rs.2,000 each per month to students of M.A. (Tamil) Literature on behalf of the World Tamil Research Centre.

On the same occasion, the Hon'ble Chief Minister also handed over compensation amounts to the families of Tamil scholars Dr. M. Tamilkudimagan, Thiru.Melanmai Ponnusami and Dr.Pon.Sowrirajan, whose books have been Nationalized and released the book 'Thirvalluvar Kaala Ezhuthil Thirukkural'.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, had made a statement under Rule 110 in the Assembly on 28.06.2018 that with a view to encouraging students of M.A. (Tamil) literature, the World Tamil Research Centre will give a scholarship of Rs. 2,000 per month to selected students. The scholarship is being given to 30 students totally, with 15 students each in the first and second year being recipients.

As per the announcement, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, inaugurated the scheme for the academic year 2018-2019 by handing over cheques for Rs. 2,000 each to 15 selected students of M.A.(Tamil) Literature, on behalf of the World Tamil Research Centre.

During the budget demand for the Tamil Development Department, it was announced that the books of Tamil scholars Dr.M. Tamilkudimagan, Thiru. Melanmai Ponnusami and Dr.Pon.Sowrirajan would be Nationalized and compensation paid to their families.

As per the announcement, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over the compensation of Rs.25 lakh to the families.

During the period of Thiruvalluvar, only Tamil Brahmi script was prevalent and Thirukkural should have been written in Tamil Brahmi script only, according to research scholars. The World Tamil Research Centre has brought out Thirukkural in Tamil Brahmi script and the same was released by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru.Edappadi K.Palaniswami.

Four taluk office buildings opened, two Revenue divisions carved out

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 12.12.2018, declared open Taluk office buildings and quarters for Tahsildars for Karimangalam, Bhuvanagiri, Nemili and Pernambut, constructed at a total cost of Rs. 10.47 crore on behalf of the Revenue and Disaster Management Department. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also inaugurated on the occasion, the new Anjetti Revenue Division in Krishnagiri District and Anamalai Revenue Division in Coimbatore District.

The Revenue Department is the mother of all Departments; it serves as the backbone of the administration and plays a major role in social growth and development. To improve the services of the Revenue Department and taking into consideration convenience of the public, new buildings would be constructed for the 16 Taluk offices in Namakkal, Salem, Tiruvannamalai, Tirunelveli, Krishnagiri, Vellore, Erode, Kancheepuram and Dharmapuri Districts, said Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma on 16.09.2016.

As per Hon'ble Amma's announcement, in Karimangalam in Dharmapuri District, office building and quarters for Tahsildar at a cost of Rs. 2.62 crore;

At Bhuvanagiri in Cuddalore District, and Nemili and Pernambut in Vellore District, office building and quarters for Tahsildar, at a cost of Rs. 7.85 crore;

Totally 4 Taluk office buildings and Tahsildar quarters, built at a cost of Rs. 10.47 crore, were declared open by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami.

In Krishnagiri District, the Thenkanikottai Revenue Division has been restructured by forming a new Revenue Division with Anjetti as the headquarters, with 6 new Revenue Villages and 9 existing Revenue Villages. The new Revenue Division has 15 Revenue Villages and 182 small Villages;

In a similar manner, the Pollachi Division in Coimbatore District has been bifurcated and a new Aanamalai Revenue Division has been formed with 3 small divisions and 31 Revenue Villages and Aanamalai as its headquarters.

Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami declared open these two Revenue Divisions. ■

NavIC gadgets given to Tamil Nadu's deep sea fishermen for weather signals

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami, at the Secretariat on 17.12.2018, handed over the communication gadget – NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation), developed by the Indian Space Research Organization to 80 fishing boat groups which are involved in deep sea fishing operations.

The Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister in the 2018-2019 budget, announced that the Tamil Nadu Government would supply the communication gadget to fishermen who are engaged in deep sea fishing.

As a follow up measure, the NavIC gadget, that can send SMS to fishermen who are engaged in deep sea fishing, was given to 80 fishing boat groups. As a mark of handing over the gadget to the groups, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over the gadget to 7 fishermen at the Secretariat.

The NaVIC gadget, with the assistance of India Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS), will send signal about weather conditions, forecasting of weather, and natural disasters such as Tsunami, earthquake and storm to fishermen who have Android cell phones, through blue tooth. The cell phones will convert the signal into messages in regional languages, including Tamil. Due to efforts of the Tamil Nadu Government, ISRO gave 200 NavIC gadgets for the use of Tamil Nadu Fishermen. ■

Public Holidays for the Year 2019

Under the "Explanation" to Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (Central Act XXVI of 1881) read with Notification of the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, No.20-25-26, Public-1, dated the 8th June 1957, the Government of Tamil Nadu hereby declares, that in addition to "Sundays" expressly defined as Public Holidays in the said "Explanation" the following days shall be Public Holidays for the year 2019.

ANNEXURE

SI.No	Public Holidays	Date	Day
1.	New Year's Day	01.01.2019	Tuesday
2.	Pongal	15.01.2019	Tuesday
3.	Thiruvalluvar Day	16.01.2019	Wednesday
4.	Uzhavar Thirunal	17.01.2019	Thursday
5.	Republic Day	26.01.2019	Saturday
6.	*Annual closing of Accounts for Commercial Banks & Co-operative Banks	01.04.2019	Monday
7.	Telugu New Year's Day	06.04.2019	Saturday
8.	Tamil New Year's Day and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's Birthday	14.04.2019	Sunday
9.	Mahaveer Jayanthi	17.04.2019	Wednesday
10.	Good Friday	19.04.2019	Friday
11.	May Day	01.05.2019	Wednesday
12.	Ramzan	05.06.2019	Wednesday
13.	Bakrid	12.08.2019	Monday
14.	Independence Day	15.08.2019	Thursday
15.	Krishna Jayanthi	23.08.2019	Friday
16.	Vinayakar Chathurthi	02.09.2019	Monday
17.	Muharram	10.09.2019	Tuesday
18.	Gandhi Jayanthi	02.10.2019	Wednesday
19.	Ayutha Pooja	07.10.2019	Monday
20.	Vijaya Dasami	08.10.2019	Tuesday
21.	Deepavali	27.10.2019	Sunday
22.	Milad-un-Nabi	10.11.2019	Sunday
23.	Christmas	25.12.2019	Wednesday

*Applicable only to Commercial Banks and Co-operative Banks in Tamil Nadu.